

HER TITLE OF HONOUR

BY

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PROLOGUE.

IN CROXTON CLOSE.

THE August evening sun was still shining on the broad lawns of Croxton Close, though the narrow, high-piled street outside the gate was all in dusky twilight shadow. It looked so cool and beautiful through the gloomy arch, so quiet and inviting after the heat and turmoil of the day! The tall ranks of elms in the outer enclosure were full of leaf, and the reposeful old houses glittered with fiery sunset reflections in the bright diamond-paned lattices of their peaked gables, and the projecting bays and oriel s of their lower storeys. About their porches and the quaint nooks and angles of their walls the powdery clematis and fragrant jessamine hung in wreaths and bowers of white and green; and the chamber window-sills had every one a box or balcony of flowers: garlands of deep blue lobelia, of orange nasturtium, masses of yellow calceolaria, of scarlet, white, and pink geranium, with abundance of modest mignonette

to breathe sweet odours, and set off the clusters of gaudier blossom.

The houses were all delicious and nest-like, but one struck me as more especially charming than the rest. I was sure it was a woman's, from its dainty preciseness. For size it was a mere cottage, but a cottage of gentility, and a perfect picture of graceful old age. Only a slight iron fence, protecting a clipped hedge of yew, separated its slip of garden from the lawns of the inner Close; and the garden itself was a complete posy—the grass like velvet, the pincushion beds and ribbon borders neat and brilliant as woven patterns of colour.

There was a tiny glass fern-house annexed, into which a door opened from a book-room as tiny; and above it hung two spacious windows, looking two ways, handsomely modernised as to their glazing, and curtained with flowers both within and without. The one commanded the Close Gate, a row of picturesque almshouses, and a long avenue of trees, and ivied stone walls, as far as Dean's Gate; the other commanded the whole expanse of the Close, the south side of the cathedral, the incomparable spire, and Bishop's Walk to Bishop's Gate, where a cloud of foliage suggested the luxuriant, peaceful seclusion of the Bishop's palace gardens. Inside the yew-hedge an impartial shower from a hose was being distributed over grass and flowers alike by a bent old man, whose

work was watched from a side-door by two female servants of cheerful countenance. As the rain fell, the growing things gave out their sweet fragrance. It was a drowsy, contemplative, pleasant scene altogether: the pleasanter, perhaps, by contrast with the grey, aged sanctuary at the foot of which it lay, like a bit of old-world country-life stolen into the heart of the city, and cherished there for pure love of beauty.

I passed leisurely forward into the Close, where a labourer was whetting his scythe to begin cutting the grass, which was well ordered as a garden, profane feet being warned off it, and bidden to keep to the pathways. The iron gates of the south porch stood ajar, and a drift of exquisite music came through the dusk, softened by distance. The organist, it seemed, was practising in the choir. The entrance to the cathedral was by a descent of several steps, and a chill air rose from the time-blackened pavement. It was better outside, where a young mason was busily carrying on the foliated work of the western front, which was undergoing elaborate restoration.

To him an ancient gossip, leaning on his stick, addressed now and then a word. "I dare say you'd not believe it, now; but when I was a boy, I've rowed up the nave here in a flat-bottomed boat—that was in the old, old bishop's time—things are mended since then."

"Some things are mended since then, sir, but it is a world of trouble always," said the workman.

"You have found that out already, have you?"

"Ay, sir, it does not take long learning."

About the spire the swallows and martins were flying in clouds; in and out of the thousand crannies of the eaves, in and out the demon-mouths of gargoyle, in and out the crossed arms of angels—swallows, martins, starlings, pretty summer sojourners! and their swift, circling, joyous flight in the pale evening sky added to the place a new charm of holy peace. "They build year after year; we never disturb 'em," said the gardener, who was cutting the grass.

I had stood observing them several minutes, half lost in dreamy thought, when I became conscious of a gentle rustle behind me, and turning my head, I saw a tall, erect old lady advancing that way. She walked very slowly upon the lawns, which were not sacred to her, and, like myself, she stood to watch the swallows, gazing upwards with a tender wistfulness that was very remarkable. She wore a trailing black silk dress, and her shoulders were draped with a rich Indian shawl. As she went by, soft-footed upon the grass, she glanced at me with large, vivacious blue eyes, and smiled, I thought—a most beautiful old lady, finely and delicately featured, with a fair faded cheek, and silver curls crowning her straight, clear

forehead. She was alone, and I wondered who she was.

As the dusk crept on, the gardener wiped his scythe, the mason shouldered his satchel of tools, and both went home. I strolled on to the end of Bishop's Walk and back, and then struck into the path which led to the Close Gate. The lady was fifty yards or so before me, and I followed her until she disappeared under the porch of the pretty flowery cottage, where no lights were lighted yet, and where the vivid colours of the flowers were all lost in universal grey.

IN CROXTON CLOISTERS.

THE bell was ringing for prayers as I passed through the Close Gate, one late October morning, some seven or eight weeks after. It was a very cold day, a thorough autumnal day, windy and wet. The leaves were flying, but the swallows were gone—the last days of summer were gone. The pretty flowery cottage was all shut up. The blinds were closed within the blurred windows; the clematis was blown loose from the wall above the porch, and hung flapping like a draggled banner in the rain. The gay garden was grown ragged with neglect; the pincushion beds and ribbon borders were blackened with frost, weedy, wild, untended—the loving hands that kept

them beautiful, the loving eyes that rejoiced in their beauty, had passed away with the swallows and the summer!

The congregation was but scant at the service, and dispersed rapidly when it was over; only the sacristan and myself remaining after the clergy, the choristers, and the people were gone. The sacristan asked, "Did I wish to see the cathedral? The Lady Chapel was in process of restoration, but he could show me the Chapter House and the Cloisters—the Cloisters of Croxton Cathedral were famous." And he led the way by a bleak, sepulchral, vaulted passage, into the still green enclosure—such a beautiful place to be buried in. The wind sounded mournful and eerie as it went wailing under the colonnades, but a gleam of sun had pierced through the sombre curtain of cloud, and shone hopefully on the wet grass, where, here and there, small lozenge-shaped stones marked the graves. There was no vulgar pomp, no pride of life carried beyond death. In the midst of the open square, under two flat stones, lay two bishops of the church; and near by, where the recently turned turf had not had time to reknit upon a new grave, were laid a fresh posy and cross and crown of flowers. Set in the turf was the usual lozenge of stone, inscribed only with the initials E. T.

"Mistress Eleanour Trevelyan," said the sacristan. "We buried her on the fifteenth of last month. She

was eighty-two; a wonderful old lady, and a deal thought of in the Close. She lived in the house opposite the gate: you would see it shut up. Mistress Eleanour Trevelyan."

The name sounded somehow familiar to me. The sacristan saw my puzzled look, and continued his explanation: "You will have heard of the Reverend Francis Gwynne, maybe? There is a fine life of him in our library, and his journals that he kept in India—he died somewhere out there a good fifty years ago. If you have read his journals, you will remember that there's often mention made in them of a young lady—this Mistress Eleanour Trevelyan was the same. A good lady, a very good lady; but it was her chief title of honour that Francis Gwynne loved her. So people say."

How strange it seemed to be standing there beside her grave! Francis Gwynne had been one of my heroes, his lady-love one of my heroines—the hero and heroine of a pathetic story ended how long ago? I read the book (and it was not a new one) when I was a child. They lived and were lovers in the last century, and I had seen her within a few weeks stepping stately, still lovely, through Croxton Close.

Here, in Croxton Cloisters, was her grave, with cross and crown of flowers laid upon it that morning in the rain.

And his. The old book had a rude woodcut of

it—by the wayside, alone. The place was like a wooded ravine betwixt two arid mountains, a very solitary place, and the trees such as grow in Eastern lands.

Perhaps it is forgotten now-a-days—perhaps his name and story are half forgotten too, and the tale of his self-devotion told again for the living generation will be something new.

I.

John Gwynne's Household.

SUNDAY evening at Pengarvon: the season mid-summer. The church-going people of the town are wending their way in a slender stream down the steep footpath, which has a low wall on the left-hand side bounding the vicar's garden. The congregation assembled in the ugly conventicle at the foot of the hill are singing with open doors, and the wild exultation of the tune, raised by two hundred enthusiastic voices, swells high above church and steeple. The little group, a father and two young daughters, issuing last from the porch, hear it, and instead of following the stream, turn off by a narrow track between the graves to a rude stone bench against the churchyard-wall, from which there is a magnificent look-out westwards to the sunset and the sea: the church standing on a lofty promontory of the cliffs, a beacon to ships in the Channel for centuries past.

The town lies out of sight under the hill, and sheltered from the fierce Atlantic winds; but the same cliffs that hide it from the furious western gales cut off its sunshine early, and it is twilight an hour sooner

in the narrow ancient streets than upon the church hill. And this is why, on fine Sunday evenings, John Gwynne and his little Martha and Mary linger in the churchyard after service; until the chapel leaves. It would be dusk indoors already, and dull without the mother, who is a Methodist, and besides, is too fragile and delicate to climb the hill. She stops short at the foot of it, therefore, keeping her son for company, and the girls go on with their father to the grey, storm-beaten old church, where the Pengarvon folk have worshipped God in the beauty of holiness ever since the first Christian missionaries came into the West, and reared His altar upon the Beacon Hill.

It is a very clear evening both on land and sea. John Gwynne rests his large frame on the stone bench, one arm folded round his little Mary, who lays her soft white cotton bonnet against his coat to shade her eyes from the saffron glow of the sky. Her sister Martha trots to and fro on her feet indefatigably, gathering her hands full of the flowering grasses that spring upon the graves, and dropping them as she goes: an alert, busy wee body, who cannot sit still. His daughters are well named: their father knows that already; Martha is for ever doing: Mary is all love and tender thoughtfulness—a gentle, dreamy soul, whom everyone is drawn to kindly.

It is Mary who hears the first notes of the dismissal hymn at the chapel, and says, “They are singing

again—they will soon be out, daddy; let us go to meet mother."

John Gwynne sits yet a few minutes longer, during which Martha halts at his knee, and also reminds him that it is time to go. And having reminded him, she sets off herself without loitering.

"If mother could come up here with us, daddy," says Mary again. "But she never comes now."

John Gwynne lifts himself from his seat heavily, and with a groan: "My good little maid!" says he, and fondly kisses the child before he sets her down. She is his "little comfort," and he will have need of her.

Hand in hand they skirt the churchyard slowly, walking in the trench-like path that runs under the wall to the lich gate, both gazing outwards as they go. And what a prospect, what a glorious prospect is it that they see! The golden gates of the sun are open in the west, the scarlet and purple curtains of the sky are rolled back upon the purple sea. The rocks are bathed in purest light; the dark vistas of moorland, the cornfields ripening to the harvest, the green downs, the woods, are all softened and suffused with violet and grey. Descending first by the wide well-worn steps of granite, fifty-two steps, like the weeks of the year, and then by the steep paved road, they drop out of sight of the aerial splendour into the full stream of chapel-folk pouring forth from their conventicle:—an

eager-eyed throng, who have got religion in a new way, and have a warmth and aggressiveness in their zeal that some of the Church-folk wonder at and deride.

Not all, however. The Vicar of Pengarvon himself lives at peace with the Methodists. And John Gwynne mocks at nothing *real*—is of all men least prone to call a fervent professor “hypocrite.” For his dear wife is a sister of the Methodist community—was a daughter of one of the earliest preachers, of one of the missionaries sent out by Wesley himself for the conversion of the west country. He had died at Pengarvon after a short but successful service, leaving one child, who was motherless also, at charge amongst his flock. Certain good women took care of her, trained her up in simple household ways, and when she was of fit years, proposed to marry her to the grave, middle-aged minister, a widower, who was serving the chapel at that time. But Alice had another suitor, whom she loved in a meek, tenacious way, and she set her lovely face like a flint against the staid minister. John Gwynne had her heart; and John Gwynne, that rough, strong man who refused to come out of the world, and would have nothing to do with prayer-meetings and love-feasts, became her husband and she his idol—every year they lived together he worshipped her more and more.

And no marvel! She was the sweetest woman!

fair, soft-voiced, beautiful, ardently affectionate, devoted to her own, pious, unselfish, sunny-tempered; a perfect wife, a mother whom her children loved without fear. And she was beautiful still, fair still, though Death had laid his hand upon her. Oh, what a pang shot through her husband's breast as he joined her at the corner by the chapel! Her eyes shone luminous as stars, a crimson stain burnt on either thin cheek, her lips were white and tremulous. The excitement of the service past, she seemed ready to sink. They did not speak as he gave her his arm for support, but they looked at one another, and a look was enough. The three children joined hands, and ran on before. Neighbours passed them with a neighbourly "Good night," and a thought of compassion. Their house was not very far down the street, and in a few minutes they reached their own door, where John Gwynne's sister stood waiting, and on the watch for them.

There was a light in the room behind the tall capable woman who held out her hands to draw Alice in.

"It will be for the last time," said a voice faint as a dying echo. "Next Sabbath I shall be with Christ in glory. Ah, John, thou wilt miss me, thou and little Francis!"

No one answered her; no one could speak. They guided her faltering steps to a low sofa that stood under the window, the sill of which was crowded with

sweet flowering plants. Hannah Gwynne loosed her bonnet and shawl, and she lay down. The three children stood about the table where the lamp was, the light shed full upon their golden hair, looking over at their mother. Three portions of bread and three cups of milk were set ready for them; at their father's bidding they began to eat and drink, and, their supper ended, went up the narrow crooked stair to bed. The mother would go too, to hear their prayers, and kiss them on their pillows; to whisper a word of counsel and love and blessing which she would not long have opportunity for. Poor mother! poor children!

The two girls slept together. "You will be good to your little brother when I am gone; he is younger than you," she said, leaning down upon their faces in the dark.

"Yes, mother, and we will take care of father too," replied Martha, eagerly; and Mary said, "Yes," under her breath; and, as the shadow moved away from the bedside, Mary felt that a tear from her mother's eyes had fallen upon her lips. She never forgot that tear; it was like the seal of a sacred promise.

Life was now so far spent with Alice Gwynne, that it was the last and truest kindness her friends could do her to let her have her own way. It pleased her to keep about the house. She could mind little Francis while the girls were at school, and while Hannah was

occupied with the work and domestic cares that she had been for many months unable to fulfil. Hannah was a good sister: a woman without ties of her own; whose hands had been busy from her youth in taking up the broken threads of other people's lives. Her brother John claimed her now; and it was an understood thing that she would continue to keep his house when his wife was gone. Alice was not jealous of her with either husband or children; for Hannah had a lively sense of her sister's rights, and her affection was not of the encroaching order. So that Alice was at rest in her heart for John and the children, Hannah was content to be spent for her and for them, without having regard to her own profit or loss in her labours of love; and she had her present and abundant reward in a charity and peace of spirit which irradiated her countenance with a light that was fairer than beauty.

Even under the impending cloud and sorrow, John Gwynne's household was not to be called unhappy. He had hardly yet relinquished hope: he could not relinquish it by a voluntary act of submission. Alice had been the sweetness and crowning joy of his life; and he could not anticipate the days when the sweetness and the joy would be gone out of it. He had begun his career as a miner—the son of miners for many generations. In hardship and ignorance all his early years, he had toiled and toiled without know-

ledge of anything better or more desirable than the half-savage customs of his own people. But he had a brain of singular intelligence and power. At sixteen, in the intervals of his work, he set himself to learn to read, to write. He acquired some skill in mathematics; and an instance of cool personal courage which saved many lives, and brought him in contact with his superiors, was the beginning of a rise in the world which culminated, before he was thirty, in his promotion to a post of great trust and responsibility in the Pengarvon mines, and his subsequent marriage with his wife, whom he had courted assiduously for three years.

Alice had all her life been surrounded with comforts, and John cherished her as the very apple of his eye. Her pious friends who had brought her up were inclined at first to fear for her with this rude, uncultured man, but they had no need. John looked wild-like enough in his work-a-day suit, equipped to go down the shaft each morning to inspect the mine for the safety of the men under his charge; but at home he was gentle and thoughtful as love could make him, and his practical, useful, contrivances in kitchen and parlour, in garden and chamber, might well make his Alice, whose strength they were to save, the envy of other men's wives whose help-mates were little or nothing to them but hard masters.

They were rich for their condition now, and John

had laid up money; but they had never moved from the old low house at the foot of the church-hill, of which they had taken possession on their wedding-day. Alice had grown fond of it. All her children had been born there, and she loved the very walls and roof of it for the years' sake that she and John had been happy there together. The garden, too, was a delight in all seasons, and it was John's hobby. He obtained from foreign sailors who came into Pengarvon Harbour seeds and slips of rare trees and shrubs and plants, which grew and blossomed freely in that sunny, south-sloping, sheltered spot. His pomegranates and magnolias, his myrtles and oleanders, were a show to all the country.

It was after the birth of her third child and only son that Alice began visibly to decline in health. She wore away slowly, very slowly, by the same insidious disease as her father. For two or three years her existence was a mere languor and weariness. Mercifully, her sufferings never became acute. Even now, within a few days of her death, she kept little Francis with her, taught him his lessons, and sewed at white-work for her girls. She was not troubled to leave them, she said, but she desired to do what she could for them while she was here.

On the Wednesday afternoon John Gwynne made himself a holiday and came home an hour or two earlier than his custom was. Martha and Mary were

away at school, and Francis had the big picture Bible open on the sofa at his mother's side, and was reading aloud the story of God's calling Samuel. Alice's countenance wore an expression of holy peace as she listened to the child's voice, and, as her husband entered with care-worn face, she held out her hand to him, signing that he should not interrupt, but should listen too. Hannah was at her needle, and through the open but shaded window came the luscious perfume of the magnolia in flower upon the wall. The high treble of the little lad's chant thrilled the hot summer silence through. His father stood behind him, one palm laid on the fair blond head, himself unable to speak.

There was a change in Alice's face since the morning, and the wistful eyes she lifted to his were full of a pathetic, pleading tenderness and sorrow. "I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord," said she, when the child ceased reading, and pressed up with arms about her neck to kiss her. John Gwynne bowed his head reverently. She understood that he acquiesced, and thanked him with tremulous lips.

After that there was silence in the room for some time. A thrush began to pipe in the garden, and Francis begged his mother to come out—she loved the singing of birds. "Not to-day, my boy," said she, caressing his peachy round cheek. Then he entreated

his father, but neither was his father to be won. He suggested, however, that perhaps Aunt Hannah would go—go with him to meet his sisters leaving school. Hannah understood that her brother wished to be alone with his wife for a few sacred moments, and she and the child went out, and down the shady side under the garden-wall hand-in-hand. The soft hum-ming of bees sounded everywhere in the heat and hush. They went first to look at the hives, lodged under a pent of thatch, and the bees took no umbrage at their intrusion. The thrush had flown to a distance at their approach, but there was a pair of cooing ring-doves in a cage to visit, and a large colony of pigeons who dropped down from their cote at the sight of Hannah, whose pocket was never quite empty of grain. All this busy, pleasant life saddened Hannah, and the child chattered his twenty questions in a minute, as if there were no grief in the world!

From a wicket in the wall they passed out into the street, the quaint old High Street of Pengarvon. In those clean timbered houses had been heard the first news of the famous Armada from Spain, and from them had gone forth many sons to the battle without grudging, both then and since. It was a time of war now, and, as Hannah Gwynne went up the High Street, the little lad in her hand, groups of men and women were standing about, hearing and telling the story of a great victory over the French at sea, tidings of which

had been brought to Pengarvon only that afternoon, though it had been known in London a fortnight ago, and celebrated with much loud rejoicing. She lent an ear for a minute to two widow-women who had lost their husbands some years since by the fortune of war; all the other gossips were full of the last new victory, but these two were reciting the half-forgotten tale of an obscure action in the West Indies, where their own good men had died.

Suddenly the church-bells rang out, peal upon peal, echo upon echo, in the awakened air! Little Francis shouldered his stick, and strutted out boldly. "When I am a man, I will fight!" cried he.

"What will you fight, my dear?" said Aunt Hannah.

"The world, the flesh, and the devil," quoth the child, with a reminiscence of his Sunday Catechism. And espying his sisters in the distance, he loosed his hand from her clasp, and ran to meet them.

They also were talking of the great victory. "Captain Trevelyan is shot!" exclaimed Martha, as they came up to Aunt Hannah.

There were tears in Mary's eyes. "He is dead," she added softly.

The Vicar's brother was dead, yet the church-bells were ringing with all their might, peal upon peal, echo upon echo, in the awakened air!

And at home Alice was dying. It seemed as if she would hardly get through the night; but the morning dawned for her once more. John Gwynne left the house for a few hours, and returned. When he came back, the Vicar was praying with his wife. Mr. Trevelyan looked pale and sorrowful; his brother whom he had lost was his only one. He spoke of him just a few words: said that Captain Trevelyan had left a young family—and it had been a splendid victory, the saving of the country, perhaps.

Alice, passing into the land of eternal peace, heard his voice as from a long way off. But little Francis, sitting by her on the bed, with his book and a few toys, shouldered his stick again at the talk of war: it was a thin lath, this stick, and the evening before his sister Mary had bound upon it a shorter lath, by way of handle, that he might make believe it was a sword. "This is the sword that I shall fight with!" cried he, and puffed out his rosy cheeks as he slipped down on the floor to march away. "It is a cross!" said his mother.

The girls had not gone to school that morning. It was close upon noon, and they were sitting together on the steps of their garden summer-house, both sad enough, when Aunt Hannah signed to them from their mother's chamber-window. They ran in quickly, Mary half blind with tears. She had been fretting ever since she awoke; love and grief quite overcame her,

and at the door she threw herself into her father's arms, with an exceeding bitter cry. He kissed her, hushed her tenderly, and brought her to the bedside. She hid her face, she felt the touch of nerveless lips, the murmur of worlds half articulate, and Aunt Hannah carried her away from the room.

It was over. In that last effort of farewell to her children, Alice's soul departed.

"I want my mam'!" whimpered little Francis, waking out of his afternoon's sleep presently.

"Mam' is in heaven," replied Mary, who had sat by his cot crying, and waiting for this moment. "But sister Mary will play with him;" and there on the floor were his best toys set out ready.

Martha was busy helping Aunt Hannah downstairs. Somebody must work, and working is less mournful than watching. Everything was done decently and in order about the house; but oh! how often was it like an arrow in John Gwynne's heart, when his little lad beat upon the door where his mother lay, with that piteous cry, "I want my mam'! I want my mam'!" He was such a child yet—not five years old, in this troubrous world, when he lost her!

After she had been taken away, and laid in the narrow house appointed for all living, Mary would lead him gently upstairs, and let him peep into the

chamber to see that she was not there. But it was a long while before he forgot his want of her. To break him of grieving, he was sent to school with his sisters, and in time his new lessons and new playmates weaned him from the present sense of his loss. But Mary talked of their mother too often for her ever to be weaned from his memory; and there she remained all his life enshrined, a most lovely and sanctifying thought.

Without any intention in it, her young brother was given over chiefly to Mary's care. She was five years his elder—half their short life-time while they were such children! Her sweet patience was his safest guide, for he was an irritable, highly sensitive little creature. With Martha he soon grew fractious; her practical bustle, and her diligence in doing, and setting others to do, in season and out of season, were a trial that his finely-strung nerves never could endure. "Leave him to Mary," said his father, when he was naughty; and to Mary he was left.

In his younger daughter John Gwynne also found his best solace for the dear presence of which his home had been bereaved. Mary was like her mother in the face, in voice, in character. To her to give up her own will seemed easy. Self-devotion and loving-kindness were born in her. Her cheerful willingness to come, to go, to stay when her father wanted her, filled, by-and-by, a sensible space in the blank of his

life without Alice. He could never call her amiss; there was no duty nor pleasure that she would not relinquish for that first of duties and pleasures—waiting upon him. It was a common thing to see them, while the long evenings lasted, trudging hand-in-hand up the church steps to mother's grave, which John kept in the most exquisite order; and Francis was often of their company. In the garden, at leisure hours, when he was pruning or training his beautiful roses and foreign plants, Mary was at his back to hold the hammer, and nails, and shreds of cloth; and she soon learnt to know his favourite flowers and the names of them, their habits and preferences, as well as Alice herself had done.

As the days shortened, and the time of fires and early candle-light drew on, the girls brought out their needle-work, and sewed with Aunt Hannah, while the father pored steadfastly over his books, his elbows on the table, his head between his hands, as abstracted as if none of them were there. Books, especially books that treated of mechanics, of physical science and discovery, were his study and delight, the main resource and stay of his mind after his wife's death. His sister Hannah was often heard to regret the man her brother might have been, if he had only had an education. And the want that John Gwynne felt and acknowledged in himself, he had resolved to take out of the way of his son. Already his dictum had gone

forth in the household. "Get Francis taught his Creed and Catechism. When he is seven years old he must go to the Grammar School, and that is what he will have to know—to read a chapter in the Bible, to say the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Church Catechism."

The little fellow could have gone through those paces cleverly at six years old, but Doctor Cornelius said it would be better not to push him. He had inherited his father's brain with his mother's nervous organisation: and it would be strange indeed if, with time and opportunity, he did not come out a wonderful good scholar.

II.

Friends.

IN the due course of events Francis Gwynne took his seat under the ferule of Doctor Cornelius, Master of Pengarvon Grammar School. He was a beautiful, lively child, not more studious than others of his age, but with an uncommon facility in learning—so the Doctor said, speaking of him at ten years old as a boy of the highest promise. The Doctor had a right to know, but, so far as appeared upon the surface, Frank was an idle little dog. His father, to whom book-learning had come late and with difficulty, could not understand it, save on the supposition that the Doctor's lessons were very easy, and himself very easily satisfied. Bigger boys than Frank did not, however, think so, and made much ado about the tasks he could get by heart in thrice reading over. He seemed to learn by intuition, but the secret really lay in his faculty of mental concentration; whatever he had to do he could set his whole attention upon, and thus he contrived to accomplish in a few minutes what his scattered-brained classmates could hardly master in half-an-hour: not that he always observed

this excellent way; in fact, like the hare of the fable, he would occasionally delay his start until the tortoise had won the race, and then Doctor Cornelius and he came into collision; for the old-fashioned Doctor was not content that his favourite scholar should neglect his duty, relying on his credit of being able to do what he pleased.

There was no sympathy for Frank at home under these circumstances, unless from his sister Mary. According to his father, there was a softness of fibre about the child that needed a hardening discipline. Amongst a mixed multitude of lads, the majority of them without reverence for intellectual gifts, he was in a fair way to get it. His greater proficiency in the classics did not save him from oppression in the play-ground; and his fine nervous irritability, too often roused by the taunts and ridicule of louts whose whole strength lay in their fists, made of his earlier school-days days of severe trial.

He earned his promotion from form to form with steady rapidity, and achieved a place in the highest when he was by two full years younger than any of his new class-fellows. "Little Gwynne" they called him; and one of them, James Carden, a heavy, plodding, good lad of sixteen, took him under his special help and protection. Carden had more than once delivered Frank from the jeers and clutches of his tormentors out of school, and his generous adoption of

him as a friend immediately on his promotion to his form completely won Frank's heart.

Carden lived in the house of Doctor Cornelius, who was his uncle and guardian. His destination was the ministry, and he was studying to pass the Cambridge examination to matriculate the following year. Meanwhile he was making himself an adept in all the out-door games of skill, agility, and strength which were practised at Pengarvon. He tried to bring little Gwynne into the playing set, but without success. Frank liked better to stay by himself under the cloisters, with a book, which he read or let alone as the mood was on him to dream or study. But if Carden was for a sea-shore ramble on half-holidays, then Frank was always with him. The marvels and perils of the cliffs were a vast enticement to his imagination, and many a dangerous climb he undertook in quest of sea-birds' eggs, which Carden himself refused to attempt. It seemed as if any physical exertion, to be worth his while, must have a savour of risk and difficulty beyond the risk of difficulties to be encountered every day.

The Pengarvon cliffs were indeed very grand, and when the tide rolled in with a strong westerly wind, then was the sea magnificent and dreadful in its might. But it was when the waves had ebbed from the white glittering sands, and the breeze was soft and low, that little Gwynne most affected the shore.

Those white sands were of microscopic shells, pearly, opalescent; the cliffs rose, prodigious barriers of rock which all the centuries of storm since chaos have not defaced. Half a mile from the town was a cove where the granite walls were hollowed into an exquisite sea-retreat—Frank's favourite retreat of all. Here in every chink and crevice had green things rooted themselves, which grew and flowered as in a fairy garden; delicate ferns that would die at the breath of a northern winter thrrove in this sheltered wild loneliness as if they loved it. The upper ledges of the rocks were quite inaccessible to human foot, and flocks of gulls and gannets held their ancestral nests secure in the lofty recesses.

Here Frank delighted to come with Carden, to bathe, to launch their mimic ships, to tempt the hazard of scaling the giddy heights, or to read some book of story and adventure borrowed from the library of Doctor Cornelius. That learned scholar was more than two generations in advance of his age in his theories of education. It was his whim that forward lads like Frank should study the masterpieces of their national literature at least as much as the masterpieces of Greece and Rome. He found, he said, that they learnt more of morals and philosophy without learning less of Latin and Greek, and that the study of Christian literature had a humanising influence not to be drawn from the wisest of the glorious old pagans. Frank

was early encouraged to range at large over the Doctor's bookshelves, and in the course of a few years he gained an extensive acquaintance with the leading heroes of romance and history. Perhaps his aunt Hannah doubted whether such acquaintance was altogether profitable, but his father approved, and said it would help to make a man of him; indeed he found capital entertainment in the old volumes himself, and notably in a very large old volume, professing to contain the entire works of one William Shakespeare, which he relished so keenly that he gave a book-hawker, who visited Pengarvon twice a year, a commission to buy him a volume like it, if he had the luck to fall in with one at the sale of any country gentleman's effects.

Frank had a voice like an angel, and read and recited beautifully. His father loved to hear him when he was in the vein. The boy seemed to have a natural affinity for what was good and great, magnanimous, valiant, devoted. His eyes sparkled with intelligence, his cheek flushed with feeling at a noble story; and he would quiver from head to foot with generous anger at a tale of wrong or oppression. The method of his education at home and at school was as advantageous to the development of his affections as of his mental powers. He had a lively appreciation of the simplicity and dignity of his father's character, and it was his ardent desire and constant effort to please him

and satisfy his expectations. And sooth to say, John Gwynne's expectations were not moderate. His friends and neighbours combined to flatter his pride in his son, and to exalt his hopes. Doctor Cornelius and Doctor Trevelyan both protested against Frank's being put to any handicraft trade, or to any profession which had not for its necessary prelude a university training. His father would have liked to make a practical engineer of him, having a vision of the grand things that were to be done in engineering by the generation to which the lad belonged; but Frank himself inclined rather to a learned life, and was more emulous of the fame of scholars and poets than of the hard-handed toil of the pioneers of social progress.

Besides, had not his mother, in her last days, dedicated him to the service of the ministry?

John Gwynne replied that a man might lead as holy a life in the world as in the Church: whoever feared God and worked righteousness was accepted of Him.

Frank had blushed and hesitated over his solemn reminder to his father, and the answer was a relief to him. It had been often a terror to his conscience that his vocation was fixed, and that he was not worthy of it—that his heart was not in it. A sense of joy and escape elated his mind for some time afterwards. His friend Carden envied him. The life and labours of a country parson presented few points of

attraction to these vigorous and enterprising young intellects. Doctor Trevélyan was excellent, but he was very fat, and he wore a wig; and most of the poor of Pengarvon crowded to the Methodist chapel. Carden's ideas and aspirations were more apostolic than the good vicar's, but probably the vicar had been less fond of his dinner and his ease five-and-thirty years ago. The lads judged him by their own standard, and youth, we know, is terribly rigorous in its theory of other people's duties.

Carden's profession had been chosen for him, and he had not self-will enough to set himself against the wishes of his few kinsfolk. He was ruled by a powerful sense of duty and obligation. His parents had both died while he was yet an infant, and for eight or nine years two ladies, cousins of his father, had taken care of him. Then he had been handed over to the charge of his uncle, his mother's brother, Doctor Cornelius, out of whose painful economies his university expenses were to come.

"It would be the basest ingratitude to disappoint the kind old man, and I could not do it," Carden confided to little Gwynne. "But if my choice had been given to me, I think I should have gone to sea. I am not sure, though."

The sea looked very beguiling at the moment, dancing, sparkling, in the clear sunshine of a June morning, washing up over the white sands towards

the cove, where the friends were spending together the first untired hours of their summer holidays.

The present idol of Frank's worship was Raleigh, that famous courtier, scholar, adventurer. But he had not made up his mind yet what he would be, only that he must have some stir and commotion in his life. If there was to be a new crusade, for instance, he might join that.

A ship with all sails set hove in sight on the horizon. The lads speculated as to what she was—a king's ship or a privateer? The world was full of war and revolution in these days, and even the children in the streets knew that things were being done in France at which the ears of everyone who heard them tingled. The latest news from Paris at Pengarvon was the execution of Louis XVI.—it was some months' old news now, but it was still talked of and discussed as the cause of the fresh armaments that England was sending out by land and sea. Many a brave Cornish lad had been impressed that spring to fight the French who would never see his father's fireside again.

"I suppose there are always crusades going on against one thing or another," said Carden, trickling the fine sand slowly through his idle fingers. "Wesley preached a crusade against the vanity and impiety of the world, and brought about a revival of religion, which the Doctor cites as a chief reason why England is spared the revolutionary fever."

"It was the Puritans who cut off the head of Charles I., though," said Frank. "My dear old dad is woefully vexed at the lengths the fanatics are going in France; for he upholds that the Revolution began on right principles, and had become a moral necessity."

Carden whistled. Neither of the lads knew very well what he was talking about. Hearsay was all their knowledge, and the extreme opinions of their elders the sum of their wisdom. Doctor Cornelius was a Tory of the Tories, who would not risk moving one stone of the ancient constitutional fabric. John Gwynne was of the same sweet English blood, but he wanted reforms in government, many and radical, which have been accomplished since by the rules of right reason, and without violence. The lads naturally took after their fathers in these non-personal matters, which in nowise interfered with their friendship.

It was high tide at two o'clock, and, as they lay near each other on the hot sands, the water crept up and up until it washed the feet of the advanced cliffs which formed the two horns of the little bay. Neither Carden nor Frank was on the watch. They had come there to bathe, had bathed, floated, swum, dived off the low rocks until they were tired, and when they were dressed again, had felt it too sultry for any further exertion but speech at intervals. They might have kept a look-out, but they did not think of it.

"It is only staying up among the rocks till the ebb," suggested Carden, and was resigned to fate.

"All the same, I wish we could sight a boat, and hail it to run in for us," said Frank, suddenly becoming alert and impatient. After a moment's pause he astonished Carden by springing to his feet and proclaiming that he would have a try to get round the Spear Point.

"There is the Sword Point beyond," said Carden. "It can't be done. You'll get a fall off the Horse Ledge, and then where are you? There is a heavy surf on, and the ledge is wet and slippery by this time."

"Don't come if you are afraid—I shall go!" cried little Gwynne with decision. He was already off—and, indeed, if he meant to do what he threatened, he could not be off too fast.

Carden threw an angry, entreating expostulation after his perverse friend; and as that did not arrest his progress, he strode after him, growling by no means mildly, "If I let the wilful little tyke be drowned or dashed to bits, I need never show my face in Pendarvon any more. He sha'n't do it," said he.

In the heat of this resolve Carden overtook Frank, and laid firmly hold of him by the shoulders. He was a good head taller than his friend, and his countenance in its present excitement showed very considerable determination. Frank laughed and took it

for a joke, and tried to wrench himself at liberty. Carden shook him in mimic wrath. "Be quiet. You are not going, Gwynne," said he.

"Who'll hinder me?" asked Frank, whitening with real passion.

"*I will,*" said Carden; and, shifting his right hand to little Gwynne's collar, he walked him, in spite of himself, some twenty paces in the contrary direction. Even then he did not relinquish his grip, but demanded if his prisoner would stay *now*. Frank defiantly replied that he would *not*; and Carden marched him without another halt straight to the spot from which he had started. Then he let him go. There was no more possibility of compassing Spear Point; the water was up above the height of a tall man at its base.

When Carden loosed his hold of Frank, he said something, laughing about the necessity there was to control fools and children; but there was not a spark of malice in his heart, and he suspected no more than a momentary vexation in his friend. They had never had a quarrel yet. Indeed, Frank loved and looked up to Carden with so genuine a boyish respect that the temptation to disobey his senior had never arisen until to-day.

Carden let him go, and proceeded to climb up the declivities of the cove to a safe resting-place above high-water mark. This was neither dangerous nor

difficult; but when he had reached a pleasant green spot in the shade, and began to look about, he perceived that Frank was indemnifying himself for his recent mortification by taking a very precipitous and perilous way which he had attempted and failed to achieve many times before, when he was perfect master of himself. Carden sang out to him not to be a venturesome ass, but Frank only mocked at him and persevered. Then Carden regretted that he had given him his liberty so soon. In fact, his present escapade was scarcely less hazardous than that from which he had just been hindered. A false step, a slip, and he must inevitably be dashed to death upon the rocks that strewed the shore, where the surf was curling and whitening already. Carden watched him with a strange awe and fascination. "Help him, help him, hold him!" he cried under his breath, appealing to the great God in heaven.

Frank seemed never to hesitate, never to pause. He climbed, he clung, he sprang, he helped himself with hands and knees, going on and on, up and up, until he was far above Carden's head, and almost in the secret chambers of the wild sea-birds. A shout of triumph announced his success.

"He has done it!" said Carden, as proud and glad as if he had done it himself; and he stood up and shouted in answer, waving a hand of honourable felicita-

tion. Foot of mortal man had never been there before!

Frank was in no haste to come down again. Above him the cliff projected like a deep cornice, and this inaccessible frieze extended round the upper walls of the cove without a break that his eye could discern. Carden, reassured in his mind, gave Frank over to his own devices and composed himself for a nap, to wile away the hungry hours of his dinnerless afternoon. He fell into a comfortable sleep, which lasted a good while, but ended in a sudden, startled waking, as from a dream of horror.

"What's that?" cried he. For a moment of time he thought *that* was little Gwynne bounding at one leap from the dizzy height where he had seen him last.

But no. Frank stood not ten paces distant from him, his hand in the air and his whole body poised in the act of flinging a stone with might and vengeance. Carden felt the wind of the missile in his hair. It struck the cliff behind him, and the splinter of rock against rock rattled sharply. And Frank's face! Its beauty was literally transfigured. Carden thought that he had a glimpse of the devil. Then a dreadful sick pallor overspread the lurid, cruel mask, and Frank fell upon the ground.

"Did it come all at once, the temptation, little

Gwynne?" said his friend, lifting him up, and supporting him.

"Yes, yes, yes!" shrieked Frank, and was beside himself. "Mother, mother, mother!" he cried, cry upon cry, as if she could hear and help him. Carden was not soft, but tears rolled down his cheeks, and his sobs shook him again! One little inch nearer, and in that lovely solitude the awful scene of the first death had been re-enacted!

It was high tide now, and the waves were dashing into the cove with a deep boom, breaking into cascades of foam upon the shelving rocks, and flinging bright showers of spray into the air. Carden longed for water to cool Frank's head, but he did not dare to leave him to himself, lest his next mad impulse should be to spring into the boiling surf. Occasionally the sea-wind blew a cloud of briny fragrance towards them, which was exquisitely reviving, but Frank's strength was the sheerest weakness even after several hours of repose. He fell into a state which was either sleep or stupor, and Carden had no help for it but to let him lie. When he roused at last he was dull and amazed, and asked in a bewildered way what had happened. Carden replied that he had been up to the gulls, and he supposed that the heat had overcome him.

"Have I had a fall?" was the next puzzled enquiry.

"Yes," said Carden, with a grim mental reserve; "you have had a prodigious fall, but give up thinking about it. Catch hold of my arm, and let's go home. It has been a terribly hot day, and I should not wonder if you were ill."

Frank did as he was bidden, and staggered down the steep, clinging fast to his friend. "I feel," said he, "as if I'd had a horrible nightmare. Is it all right, Carden?"

"I shall not talk to you, little Gwynne—save your breath for the zigzag. Hold up! Nice knees you've got for Miss Martha to patch and darn—just look at 'em."

Frank made an effort to rub off the dirt and rents, missed his aim, and laughed hysterically.

"Be quiet! you are the fidgetiest little tyke!" growled Carden.

Altogether the elder boy was much relieved when he delivered Frank over to his aunt Hannah and his sisters. They professed not to have been in the least degree anxious, but to have been quite sure how it was Frank had not come home to dinner. Carden advised that dinner should be given him now, and after that, quiet and bed: "For you know what he is when he has a fit to do what he pleases. Hot as it was at noon, he climbed higher to-day than ever he climbed before; he gave me a fright, and was fright-

ened himself too, and I don't think he has got over the shake."

"I can see he has not," said Aunt Hannah, and nodded, and shut the door in Carden's face.

Then Frank fell a victim to Martha's fussy kindness. She asked if he was hungry, thirsty, and what he would have; if he was tired, hurt, or only stiff; and she scolded him for the damage to his clothes, saying there was no end to the work and mending where there was a boy in the house. Meanwhile, Mary expedited the preparations for tea, and his father came home.

John Gwynne's shrewd eyes discerned more of the back-current of excitement in his son's visage than the women's had done. He heard their version of what Carden had said, and did not implicitly trust it. There was something behind. Frank drank greedily, but could eat nothing; his recollection of the day's work was clearing, and gusts of fear and misery shook him within. His passionate irritability was no secret at home, but it had never betrayed him into such wickedness as had tempted him that afternoon.

"Been a bad lad, Frank?" said his father with a penetrating gaze upon him. Frank made no reply. "Seen the old enemy, I am afraid!" and Frank's white cheek and contracted brow confessed for him that he had indeed seen that old enemy, and been

hail-fellow-well-met with him to his own terrible discomfiture!

The subject dropped then, and John Gwynne began to speak of other things; but when the tea was over, and Frank escaped into the garden, his father went after him, and by-and-by, with a little talk, he elicited the whole story, so far as the lad was able to tell it. He told the truth, but it was with trembling; for hitherto his outbreaks of anger and vindictiveness had brought upon him severe paternal chastisement. Apparently, however, John Gwynne felt this occasion too grave for his interference by way of correction.

"You were Satan-like in malice, and Carden was Christ-like in forgiveness," he said with sorrowful sternness. "You have had a great lesson, Frank, and know yourself better than you did yesterday. By infinite mercy you have been once saved from the wicked intent of your heart; only the grace of God can keep you from coming to an evil end. May He give it you, for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake. Amen." John Gwynne uncovered his head as he uttered his brief ejaculatory prayer, and then moved away, leaving his son alone.

The long summer evening faded into twilight, and Frank still crouched upon the ground. Oh the wretchedness, the abasement, the utter hopelessness of those hours! His sister Mary watched him from that

window of the parlour which was still called "Mother's window," and her heart ached to comfort him. At last she went out, and met her father pacing up and down his favourite walk between the espaliers, but his thoughts were not busy with his fruit-trees or his flowers. Mary saw his dejection, and he interpreted the wistful desire in her eyes, and bade her go and talk to the lad. Mary understood that some great tragical event had happened, but she asked nothing. She just went over the grass to her young brother, stooped to take his hand, and said would he come indoors? Frank looked up at her with pitiful tears like a distressed child, and as she put her arm round him to lead him away, he wept aloud. She wept too for company when, with many sobs and breaks between, he told her his story. A sort of terror was upon him—a terror of himself, which increased as the enormity of the guilt he had incurred was more clearly revealed to his memory, his conscience and his imagination. Mary felt that this agony of self-distrust was salutary, though her heart bled for his pain. She could do nothing but the best thing—she knelt down and prayed for him.

The following morning John Gwynne summoned Frank to go with him to the mines. He wanted to show his son something of the patience, abnegation, and suffering of men. At home all was ease, peace, loving-kindness. Frank was the spoilt darling of the

house. His sisters loved him like two tender, anxious mothers. Great things were predicted of him; he was a genius, and was to go into the world and do wonders. They were quiet, domestic girls, who had never travelled beyond their own town, and whose school-training had stopped short at reading, writing, and the four elementary rules in figures. But Mary had acquired some cultivation since. She would have done credit to the whole circle of feminine accomplishments had not John Gwynne considered idle graces unfit for his daughters. Martha regretted the want of them now, for she was a clever young woman with notions of rising in life; but Mary was simply refined and gentle-spirited; she could sing in a sweet melting voice, and enjoy a range of reading that made her a delightful companion to her father and brother. These two looked up to Mary as a miracle of wisdom and kindness; but she was not so much admired beyond home as Martha, who, besides being clever, was also very pretty, animated and gay. Of Mary, those who loved her did not think much whether she was pretty or not; to them she had just the sweetest face in the world, and the eyes of a good angel.

It was Mary who, while Frank was absent with his father, had to receive Carden. He came in haste, bringing "Don Quixote," which he had promised to lend to Frank, and he wanted to bid him good-bye. Dr. Cornelius had long projected a visit to the great

metropolis, and had suddenly made up his mind to take it now, and to have his nephew's company. They would not return until the end of the holidays. Mary said how sorry Frank would be, and something in her tone implied that she thanked Carden for his consideration towards her passionate little brother. Carden coloured and stammered over what he had next to say, for he would rather the whole strange story had remained a secret between Frank and himself. Mary felt this, and with serious courtesy she received his messages, wished him well in London, and let him go without further allusion to it, though her heart was swelling with admiration of his magnanimity. Perhaps they understood each other none the less for the restraint of speech.

When Frank came home in the evening, tired and amazed with the wonderful and sorrowful things he had witnessed, he fairly fell a-crying because he had missed his friend! Mary cheered him with a reminder that it was only for the holidays, but the event proved her mistaken. Doctor Cornelius did not bring his nephew back to Pengarvon, but left him in Cambridge with a tutor who received students into his house to prepare them for matriculation.

To Frank this separation from his friend was a real disaster at the time. He could not cast out of his thoughts their last day of association together. He did Carden the justice to believe that he had

forgiven him, but it was a terrible recollection notwithstanding. Those who knew Frank's irritability would not, however, have had him spared that wholesome bitterness, which, indeed, acted as a moral tonic, invigorating him, and giving him a power of control over himself that he might never have acquired without it.

Another year in the grey cloisters of Pengarvon School matured his character remarkably, without abating its vehemence. He was a chief favourite with Doctor Cornelius, who was proud of his scholar, and had such entire faith in his talents, discretion, and valour, that he began to advise his father to send him to Oxford to contend for the next vacant scholarship at Corpus Christi College. This advice was heard in John Gwynne's household with general acceptance and approval. There was nothing, the women thought, that Frank could not do if he tried. And a scholarship, if he won it, would be an important help to his education. Frank was vastly elated by the high opinion entertained of his prospects, and continued to work his best during the interim. He was not yet fifteen, and fifteen is a sanguine age. His father did not profess to believe in him quite so enthusiastically as his sisters, and promised not to be dismayed if his son began his university career with a failure. Perhaps he thought the lad too young for a life at his own guidance—perhaps he thought that a check to his

early self-conceit would not act amiss on his ultimate success.

But Doctor Cornelius would hear no talk of checks or failures. "He will win, sir; I stake my reputation on it that he will win!" cried the old master. "I was never deceived in a boy yet; and I say that if God grant him to live as long as you or I, he will be distinguished amongst the greatest men of his age!"

In his heart John Gwynne believed it too, and Frank was well aware that nobody's expectations of him were pitched higher than his father's. And his perfect respect and affection for his father were his main incentive to exertion: even the Doctor's esteem for his talents was not valued half so much as his father's appreciation, for Frank had the sagacity to recognise in his father a man of genius, upright, honourable, whose one little word of praise carried more weight than the flattery of a thousand.

III.

In the Days of their Youth.

“THE years fly!” That was Aunt Hannah’s view of time, herself going down-hill.

Midsummer had come again—the tenth midsummer since John Gwynne had lost his dear wife; but except that the children had grown visibly older in the interval, there was no change to speak of in his house. More than once or twice there had been a motion to leave it for a better, but John Gwynne was quite unwilling to be disturbed in his familiar haunts. The dim old parlour was sufficient for him, and his garden was finer than any garden to be had thereabouts. It had enjoyed two-and-twenty years of his loving culture!

Martha was the leading voice for change: she wanted a larger sphere. Mary, now as ever, was anxious rather to wait on her father’s wishes; and besides, she was contented for herself.

“We are just as happy here,” she said one day when the debate with her sister ran high. “I don’t think we shall ever love any place as well as mother’s window, or our little summer-house under the vine.”

"I am not talking of the sentiment of home, I am saying that ours is too poor a way of living for us now," urged Martha. "We might afford something so different. Other men, when they get rich in the world, make a show of it; but we remain in the same place, as if father was still a clerk with the same weekly wages as he had when he was first married. If only for Frank's sake, we ought to make an effort."

"I don't believe Frank cares; and if he is to go to college, that will be a reason to practise economy."

"You don't understand me, Mary. If Frank is to go to college and we are to go on in our original groove, we shall lose him. His friends will be gentlemen, and when he comes home nothing will be like what he is used to."

"We shall never lose Frank, bless the dear lad!" said Mary, and felt that she had finished the argument.

Not so Martha. She was keenly persistent. "But I maintain that we *shall* lose him; or, if we do not exactly lose him, we shall keep him in the way of many mortifications. And where, I ask, is the need of that? Can it be pleasant for a young man to have his social inferiority constantly obtruded upon himself and his friends by the sordid meanness of his father's household?"

Mary restrained her tongue from answering. She

had frequent cause for such forbearance towards her sister, for Martha, when she was excited, used strong language. Mary knew well that their home was as free from the reproach of sordid meanness as any home in Pengarvon. There was no stint of charity there. Aunt Hannah's habits were plain and domestic, but she had the refinement of true piety and natural goodness. And as for their father, John Gwynne was honoured amongst his neighbours, whether gentle or simple, no man more. His name had gone far beyond the bounds of his own parish now, and was enrolled with the names of those scientific discoverers whom posterity regards as the noblest benefactors of the human race. Travellers to Pengarvon seek out the house where he lived, and where his son Francis was born; for it still stands at the turn of the road under the Church Hill, and the quaint old High Street looks much the same to-day as it looked that brilliant afternoon in the last century, when his dear Alice lay dying, and the bells were ringing for a famous victory over the French.

After a pause Martha returned to the charge. "If you would add your voice to mine, Mary, a change would soon be made."

"But, dear Mattie, who besides yourself wishes for a change?" remonstrated Mary. "You know that father does not. The last time it was discussed, did he not say that he should bear transplanting as badly

as the magnolia, which has drooped ever since it was moved, which will never come round, or be itself again? I could not have the heart to take him from his garden. Think how hard his work is, and his pleasures how few! And it was in this old house he lived with mother! For my part, I would rather stay here, and so would Aunt Hannah."

Aunt Hannah, when appealed to, had no hesitation whatever in expressing her sentiments in favour of remaining. "Let your father and me bide quiet in the old nest! it is for you young birds to fly away and build in fresh places—not for us."

"Indeed," says Martha, "I was not thinking of that!"

"Twould be only natural, my dear, if you were. It is what most young women think of—it is what I thought of when I was blithe and bonny like you."

Martha blushed, feeling, perhaps, that her very protest was a half confession, and she said no more at present about moving house. There was, indeed, an assiduous visitor to her father, whom friends called "Miss Martha's suitor," and his pretensions were no mystery. But Martha had other things to think of besides courting and nonsense, she said: "other things" being the getting ready of Frank's outfit for his momentous visit to Oxford, which had by this time been fully decided on. There were, however, warm twilight hours when Aunt Hannah, on the plea

that the days were long enough for work, deferred to light the lamp, when the girls were glad to straighten their fingers from the needle, and it was very sweet in the garden amongst the flowers. And these hours were Mr. Murchison's opportunities, which he did not let slip. He was a judicious Scotchman, and perceived that Miss Martha would make an excellent, thrifty wife.

The clematis was in blossom about the parlour window when Francis Gwynne left home for the first time. Mary kept her domestic calendar that way. The clematis was in blossom, therefore it was October, with nights of heavy dew and days of hot sunshine: the rich Indian summer before the melancholy fall of the leaf. As the time drew on for him to go, his spirits rose to the occasion. And it was no small adventure to be undertaken by a lad of fifteen. He was to travel alone; to find himself at the end of his journey entirely amongst strangers, without any interest in the university, and provided only with a letter of introduction from Doctor Cornelius to the Sub-Rector of Exeter College, where the Doctor had had his own education. It was understood that in the event of his being unsuccessful in the trial for the scholarship, he should return to Pengarvon forthwith; but no one now laid any stress on this probability. They all conspired to send him away in good heart.

"You will keep me a little journal of everything that happens to you," said Mary, reminding him of a promise the last evening they were together; and Frank renewed his pledge, and claimed a return.

"And you keep me a home-journal, Mary; I shall love to read it when I am absent from you all." Mary pleaded, what should she have to write? what ever came to pass at Pengarvon that he could not picture for himself far better than she could write it? "Never mind," says Frank, "write all the same; I shall like to have it." And Mary thereupon consented, and was glad afterwards, for it proved a treasure to her, almost like talking to him when he was away. She began it the very hour of his departure, taking for the purpose three sheets of blue wire-wove paper stitched together—enough, as she thought, with her fine, clear writing, to last her a month, and before that was over, the result of the examination for the scholarship would be decided one way or another.

"October, 1, 1795.

"DEAR FRANK,—I have just taken down the little lath sword, and kissed it! I wish you could have it hanging by your bed every night of your journey, and in Oxford. It is more like a cross than a sword—the fitter for the warfare you dedicated it to! I think I shall hang it in my room until you come back—but, no—here I shall feel more alone with you, so here I

will write, and remove nothing that recalls you to me. This is a delightful window of yours; how green and quiet it is on the Church Hill, and the dew sparkling on the grass, though it is past noon—it will not dry to-day any more than my tears! You are not out of sight of the steeple yet; if the bells would break out, you would hear them over the moor! But I would rather not have them ring just now—you know why. My prayers follow you, my dear young brother, and all my cares for you I strive to cast upon God, who alone can give you grace and strength to persevere in your good resolutions. And for Christ's sake He will, if you ask Him.

"My father turned back to the door when you were gone, and said to me, "However it ends, Mary, we are sure that all must work together for good; but he is very young. If his mother had been here, I do not think she would have let him plunge into the world so soon." You see, therefore, dear, what confidence we place in you, and how anxious we must needs be—though we know that you have tried to give us no cause for anxiety since this important step in your life was consented to by my father. You will not disappoint us, I am sure—in your conduct, I mean; as for the scholarship, we have not set our hearts upon it so as to be disappointed.

"*The 8th.*—Doctor Trevelyan paid us a visit this afternoon. He had a pretty young lady, his niece, with

him, who has come to stay the winter at the vicarage. She has never been in Cornwall before. Both her father and mother are dead: her father was killed at sea, fighting the French. I remember the news arriving at Pengarvon; it was only a day or two before our dear mother died. You cannot recollect it, you were too little. But it was then you would be a soldier, and I made your lath sword. What trifles stick in our memories, hanging by great events! The good vicar was pleased to hear that you had kept up in valiant spirits. ‘Nothing great is ever done without enthusiasm,’ says he; ‘and Frank has the enthusiasm that makes martyrs!’ I love the kind old man, because he always expresses such a generous, high opinion of my dear brother.

“The young lady went into the garden to see the doves, and Martha gave her that nice pair you made the new cage for. They will be company to her in the dull days—not that any days need be dull, unless we turn our faces from the light. She was in a transport of joy, and thanked Martha with the most charming grace. I do not believe that I ever saw so sweet-mannered or so beautiful a young lady! The Doctor pretends that she has turned everything upside down at the vicarage. ‘No great harm if she has,’ says Martha, ‘for you sadly want a regulation there!’ The Doctor was amused, and chuckled in his fat, amiable way; then he enquired for Mr. Murchison, and praised

the Scotch character, which made Martha look down and plait the hem of her apron, and the Doctor nodded aside at Aunt Hannah and me, as much as to say that he had had his revenge, and now he would go.

“*The 14th.*—You are safe at Oxford now, my dear little Frank, safe from the perils of the road and the rain. What rain it has been! The last roses of summer are quite washed away; we shall see no more of them, nor of the genial sunshine this side Christmas. I am sorry. I love the bright days and blue weather, when the sea is quiet. The chill of days like this gets into my very heart and bones. There was a wreck last night near the Spear Point: whether the wind drove the brig on the rocks, or it was allured by a false light, no one dares say; but it went completely to pieces, and not a soul was saved! It was a brig from Portugal, and must have had a crew of twelve or fourteen men, and perhaps a passenger or two. And this disaster before we call it winter!

“*The 17th.*—My father keeps cheerful, but he misses you; oh, yes, he misses you, though he says nothing. He counted up this morning at breakfast how many days before we can have a letter; we might have one to-morrow, or the next day, if you wrote on your arrival. We wonder how you are lodged, and whether Doctor Cornelius’s friend is friendly to you: we wonder if the examinations have begun, and I think that my father is yielding himself more and more

to the hope of your winning the scholarship. Well, my dear, if you do, it will be a fine feather in your cap, which you may wear to the glory of God; if you do not, you will come back to us, and I shall have my little brother to nourish and cherish a year or two longer. I promise you I will be glad either way.

“*The 20th.*—This morning we have your dear letter. We were troubled yesterday, when it did not come; but now all is right again. You have forgotten nothing that we wanted to know; you are a dear, good, thoughtful Frank, and we all love you! My father said, as he folded up the letter, ‘Frank is his mother’s own child; he will never give anybody a sore heart if he can help it, God bless him!’” You have rooms in Exeter College by the interest of the sub-dean: that is welcome news to Aunt Hannah, who has fancied you lost for loneliness in that remote city of Oxford, which she never heard of till there was a talk of your going—so she avers; but I think she must have heard of Latimer, and Ridley, and Cranmer there. And you are not in awe of the dons, of the examiners; but if you are the youngest of the competitors, I am afraid, Frank, *I am afraid!* Don’t be too sure, too confident of victory. How I wish you could hear me! The disappointment will be too cruel else.

“*The 28th.*—I have written nothing here for a week. Dear Mattie has one of her severe colds, and we try to make her stay in the parlour and nurse her.

self, which she does not like, but which she ought to do. She almost frightens me when the cough seizes her sometimes, and she *will* stir about and be busy when she sees others taking their rest. It is as if she thought the world would come to a standstill when she gives up managing it! While Aunt Hannah and I are on our feet, she seems tolerably tranquil; but her mind is instantly in alarm when we sit down, lest Kitty, poor maid, should be following some of her own pernicious devices, siding away half-cleaned pans, or imperfectly polished table ware, or letting her kitchen-fire out, or gossiping at the door, with her plump arms folded in her apron, while pussy is in the pantry stealing the cream: all these disasters, and many more, have been imagined as happening ten times a day to keep us in a chafe and fret. Dear Mattie, I wish she had a more reposeful disposition! Mr. Murchison looks very grave at seeing her so ill and restless; he has a kind heart, and will make her a kind husband, I trust.

"I fancy I hear you whistling. It is true, Frank, Willie Murchison is to be our brother! Mattie has consented, after many delays, to go and be housewife to him, 'whatever happens to us.' We promise her to do the best we can, and not complain.

"My father had a visitor on Wednesday, Mr. James Watt, the inventor of the steam-engine, a wonderful

discoverer. They had a good talk together, and I never saw my father more delighted than with the strange gentleman's account of the beginning of his great inventions. They paid each other many fine compliments, and my father says our Cornish mining masters do themselves wrong in defrauding Mr. Watt of his rights in the invention, which is of such vast benefit to all of them. Trials have been going on for several years about the infringement of his patents; but these things I do not understand, only they cause him evident vexation, and much wear and tear of mind and body. He appears in weak health, but is a very pleasant gentleman, and comes from the same part of Scotland as our Willie Murchison; from Glasgow, that is. He has two sons himself, and when we told him on what errand my father's son was gone away to Oxford, he cordially wished you good luck.

"Shall we have much longer to wait for the news? Already the examinations may be over, already the result may be known. Are you triumphant and glad, dear? or are you defeated and sad? There is a rhyme, without intention. Last Sunday, coming out of church, Dr. Cornelius spoke to my father, and gave him the letter to read that he had had from you. It was a beautiful letter. Oh, I think you must have won! All our hearts rejoice and give thanks to God that He is leading you into the paths of everlasting life!"

Here Mary's attempt at a journal came to a full stop.

Frank had *not* won the scholarship. He would not, however, let tidings of his failure precede him home. Perhaps the lad had not the heart to write. His father's protestations notwithstanding, he knew that he could not help but be grieved, and the mortification to himself was acute. The day the decision was promulgated, he made up his packet to return to Pengarvon, and his friend at Exeter College gave him a letter to carry to Doctor Cornelius, in which he was said to have passed the examinations, and to have acquitted himself remarkably well—so well that a division of opinion rose amongst the examiners, two of whom gave their voices for Frank's election; the majority were, however, for the successful competitor, a young gentleman from Suffolk, three years Frank's elder.

Frank's disappointment was beyond expression; but he felt that he had been fairly beaten, and that the decision was impartial, so that no anger or bitterness deepened his humiliating sense of defeat. Still, it is far from an exhilarating thing to return amongst kins-folk and friends plumed of one's wing-feathers; and the poor lad's eyes filled suddenly with burning tears, when the coach that was carrying him home halted to breathe the horses on the high ground of Wilderspin

Common, and have him a view of Pengarvon steeple only two miles away. Then he wished that he had written, that they knew he was coming back, that they expected him.

It was about four o'clock of a weird November afternoon, when every hill-top, and the cliffs and houses and bare trees were all a distinct picture in greys and greens; when the sea was a plain of purple, and the sky a roof of lead, so still, and heavy, and dull. The coach stopped at the Crown and Anchor, in the Market Place. Frank jumped down, received his bag, and ran off with nimble feet. Who likes the greetings of acquaintances who expect they have bidden you God-speed for years, when you come back crest-fallen after the lapse of weeks? Frank wished to avoid such recognitions, and he kept straight on his way, past the High Cross, and up the High Street, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left. The Grammar School gates were closed, the boys were still in school; he escaped their outrush by five minutes, and reached his father's door without having been once stopped or questioned. To-morrow would be time enough for that ordeal.

It was an old-fashioned humble door, that opened with a latch. The instant his hand was on it, he heard Mary's voice within cry, "That is our dear

Frank!" and the next moment she was kissing him, and bidding him not be troubled: they had guessed how it was when no letter came: they *knew*, and his father was prepared. The worst seemed over then! Aunt Hannah came forward, gathering up her knitting, and was as kind as Mary; and if Martha held aloof a little while, it was because that somehow, through his defeat, her pride was more keenly hurt; she made a boast of Frank oftener than the rest, and that was why his failure vexed her more personally. "It was a pity," she said, "a pity that he had ever gone—as things had turned out!"

The meeting with his father was silent, full of good feeling on both sides. John Gwynne was wiser than to discourage his son, and he hid his own chagrin with care. The lad looked thin and pale, worn with his journey, and, who knows? perhaps with a sleepless night or two. He wanted food and warmth and comfort—he was but a boy after all, and slight and delicate of body, though his spirit was big enough for a giant. By-and-by Mary enquired for his journal: his journal? he had kept none! promise had been easier than performance. But he told them about Oxford, that beautiful city, described its grand buildings, its river and gardens, its famous public library, and ancient church of St. Mary, and his talk was livelier than any journal. And that he was not permanently dis-

heartened for university trials was plainly manifested by his continually winding up his paragraphs with the words: "When I go to Oxford again," or, "When I go back to Oxford."

But at the end of the evening, after the women were gone upstairs, and Frank was left with his father alone, the poor boy felt that he must speak a little in extenuation of his disaster. "I tried hard, father; I did my very best! I all but won, indeed I did!" John Gwynne answered his son with a manly, tender earnestness.

"My dear, I am sure of it! Say no more; your father believes you: you are too young, too anxious yet. You shall go to Doctor Cornelius for a couple of years longer, and then you will be better braced for these encounters."

Frank felt his whole soul strengthened. If his own people were with him, he could well abide the trivial jeers that he might have to meet with outside his home. He slept off his fatigues and his most poignant vexations, and the next morning, at roll-call, he marched into the school, presented his letter from Oxford to Doctor Cornelius, and took his old place at the head of his form, as quietly as if he had never been absent for a day. Those near him perceived a frequent slight quiver of his lips and contraction of

his brow, but nothing more; and the pert, familiar jests and enquiries of his class-mates he answered without irritation.

"And that, sir, speaks volumes for his self-government and moral courage," cried Doctor Cornelius, relating the circumstances of Frank's return to Doctor Trevelyan. "A nervous, sensitive lad of fifteen, who bears without flinching the winks and sneers of dull and envious companions, will not turn his back on his conscience when he has to decide between duty and the pleasant temptations of the world. Give Francis Gwynne opportunity, and Pengarvon will be proud of her miner's son!"

It was at this period, when all his friends were talking of Francis Gwynne's disappointment, and how heroically he had borne it, that he first met the beautiful lady whom afterwards he loved. The good vicar invited him to breakfast—an honour he had enjoyed twice before on his achievement of school-prizes; and there was Miss Eleanour Trevelyan, in the rosy radiance of a frosty morning, presiding over the tea-poy. Frank made his bow to her with a formal grace—he was as beautiful as she was, but far more modestly reserved—and when their eyes met, she looked kindly, to encourage him to be at ease. She was a sweet little lady, with a perfect sense of the degrees in society, and no inclination to trespass upon them; she

imagined that Frank must, of course, feel shy amongst his betters, and shame-faced about his defeat at Oxford, and her goodness taught her to be sweeter to the humble and discouraged. She was very good indeed to Frank, and listened most winsomely while the Doctor made him discourse of Oxford, which he had not himself revisited for twenty years. And Frank, once in the vein to talk, talked admirably, neither forgetting the dignity of his company nor his own self-respect. Miss Eleanour said in her own mind that he might have been a gentleman's son for anything that appeared to the contrary in the figure and behaviour. She wore a scarlet ribbon amongst her soft brown curls, and some sort of dark dress with white ruffles at her throat and wrists, and was quite the gentlewoman in her place at table. But, released from her cumbrous office of house-mistress, she was still something of the spoilt child, and she imperiously commanded Frank to come and see his doves before he went home. Frank obeyed, and found her feeding them with crumbled bread.

“*My* doves now. I call them Courtly and Lovely — do you like their names, sir?” Frank liked their names exceedingly, but recommended a change of diet, and a bar in their cage. “Will you please to make a bar, then? you made the cage,” says the little lady, who, in her uncle’s house, has only to look a

wish and it is accomplished. Frank consented—he will make the bar, and fix it in its place. "Thank you, sir. I want my doves to be happy. They are the only pets I have here except old Captain—and he is no company on account of bad temper."

At this point the colloquy dropped, and the interview ended with a bow and a curtsey.

IV.

Long Thoughts Before.

It was not the destiny of Francis Gwynne to return to Oxford, the scene of his early defeat. His friend James Carden was at Cambridge, a Trinity man, and very successful there. He revisited Pengarvon during the next Long Vacation, and found little Gwynne still at work under Doctor Cornelius, and Doctor Cornelius as ready as ever to stake his reputation on his favourite scholar's doing famously in the world.

There seemed a great gap in years and experience between the two friends now, but they were capital company, and loved each other heartily. It was this meeting again with Carden that made Frank turn his thoughts away from Oxford to the sister-university, and desire to go to Cambridge when his time came, because his friend was there. Carden approved and encouraged this predilection, and advised him, if he really meant it, to bestow more pains on his mathematics—Frank having hitherto shown a classical bias, and almost a distaste for the drier study. Carden urged him also to steadier work; for Frank retained

in its full vigour his old habit of working by spurts, and found plenty of leisure for books of travel, romance, and poetry. These things, said Carden, might make him an elegant scholar, but they would hardly help him to distinction at Cambridge; and, of course, Frank meant to win prizes and first places wherever he entered. Of course he did, Frank rejoined: if he was not intending to come out Senior Wrangler at last, he would abandon all thoughts of Cambridge, and betake himself to his father's trade! Carden did not laugh at his little friend's soaring ambition; on the contrary, he told him that he had no doubt he might come out Senior Wrangler at last, if he would work for it. To prove his good-will, Frank began his mathematical pursuits by attempting to commit to memory the Propositions of Euclid; at this Carden *did* laugh; but he made amends for laughing by coaching him in the right road for an hour every day while he remained at Pengarvon.

When left to himself again, a boat, his gun, or an amusing book were still, however, too often the rivals of Frank's Algebra, and he used to attribute to a want of taste for mathematics what ought rather to have been ascribed to idleness. But he lived in the midst of kindly judges, and, so long as he had a book in his hand, they believed that he was studying to improve himself. His father encouraged his diversity of whims, and always cried out: "That's right, Frank;

have a care for your health; there is no profit in labour without health!" when he saw him take his gun to go gull-shooting on a holiday. But perhaps Frank might have gone gull-shooting rather less frequently with equal profit to his bodily frame; he was of that opinion himself later on, when he had to burn much midnight oil to redeem the lost hours of this present time.

There was, however, nothing in his conduct seriously to blame, and little to create anxiety amongst those who loved him, when he at length left them to go to Cambridge. He was barely seventeen when he began his residence at the University. He entered, not at Trinity, where Carden was, but at St. John's College; yet this did not lose him the valuable society and guidance of his friend. Carden sought Frank out at once upon his arrival, and gave him all the help that a freshman stands in need of during the perils of his first term. He could not save him entirely from the temptations of youth and idleness within himself, but he kept him from going very far out of bounds; and that Frank did work to a purpose, how much soever he seemed to play, was proved at the public examinations of his college in December, when he achieved a good place in the first class; a success which, coupled with his extreme desire to gratify his father and fulfil the expectations that were entertained of him at home, encouraged him to such diligence in

study that, at the next public examination in the summer, he stood second on the class-lists—a point of elevation that flattered his pride not a little, and gave Doctor Cornelius a signal triumph.

The assurance of having done well, and of being able to do better, roused all Francis Gwynne's latent ambition. His old schoolmaster, his father, his sister Martha (now married to Mr. Murchison, living in a slated house, and a lady in her way), desired great things for him, and he began to desire them ardently for himself. Only Mary, that sweet saint, preached holiness before honour, and a good conscience before the praise of men. There were pleasant snares in his path, but he walked cautiously, avoided dangerous company, and kept close by the collegiate rule of duty. His superiors commended his conduct, his talents, his application; the friends with whom he surrounded himself loved him, and with their love and commendation he was satisfied. Carden told him there was something more to be desired; that the thoughts and intents of his heart were of higher moment than the outward appearance he made before man; to which Frank, with some irritation, theoretically agreed, and was also, for the present, satisfied with that theoretical agreement. His temper still too easily caught fire at a hint of rebuke, and his pride was increasing with what it fed on. He needed a check, and a check came. At the next Christmas examination he lost the

prize for themes; and in the class-list of the following Midsummer he found himself placed second again, instead of first, as he had fondly expected—a double disappointment which nettled him to the quick.

It was after this rebuff to his ambition that Francis Gwynne made his first appearance among his own people since his leaving home for the University. The previous Vacations he had spent in Cambridge, partly to save the expense of the long journey, and partly that he might give himself wholly to study. He carried home academical honours enough to appease a moderate thirst for distinction, but his recent failures had filled him with discontent. By way of increasing it, his friends made more enquiries about the prizes that he had lost than about those he had won. Doctor Cornelius was chagrined that he had not done himself more credit in Latin composition; and his father's congratulations were mingled with hopes that he would acquit himself better at the examination for degrees, and he made no pretence of concealing that his mortification would be excessive if his son took any place but the highest.

All this Frank felt was against him—was discouraging, vexing, unreasonable. He was out of heart himself, yet he resented the faintest insinuation of doubt or distrust from others. What could they understand, he said, of the toils, the privations, the scorns

of his lot—the lot of a poor student without friends, connections, or money? He never cited any particular instances of suffering, but railed indefinitely at those who were richer, better born and more versed in the world than himself; he was envious of their fortune, yet contemptuous of their person. "Ah," said Martha, "I told you how it would be! At Cambridge he lives with gentlemen. He is ashamed of his home." It was impossible to tell what Frank was ashamed of, but at intervals he was bitterly ashamed of himself, of his petulance, his false pride, and his selfish, exacting temper. Mary did not know her dear little affectionate brother again in the dissatisfied, impatient young man, who had returned to her. The exquisite irritability of his mind seemed quite beyond his will to control it, and for some weeks he was a sorrow in the house to them all. His father bore his neglect with a mild patience that was more cruel to remember than the harshest reproaches, but Mary went from him many times weeping.

The root of his discontents was within himself. When Mary, with the tenderness and earnest courage of faith, spoke to him of religion and the things that most nearly concerned his peace, he heard her with restive impatience, inwardly convinced of the truth of what she said, but set against it by the pride and vain-glory of his heart, and his growing love of the world. He had forfeited much of his original simplicity of

character, and with it his reverence for the simplicity of manners in his own family. Aunt Hannah alone upheld the authority of home upon him, and made it her duty to treat him with a plainness that was salutary, but far from palatable.

"It is not sound learning that's taught you to despise what you are sprung from, Francis," said she on one occasion, delivering her mind of a burden that had weighed upon it many days. "What *are* you, that you should think scorn of your kith and kin? Are you better than your father? Nay, not so! John Gwynne is a man among men; you are but a lad puffed out with conceit, a little lad standing on tiptoe to look over taller heads! It would become you to give honour where honour's due, and to wait in your natural place, which is a humble place, until you are called to go up higher. It is not me that am going to be fretted by your vanities! I'd have you bethink yourself what you are made of, and know that it is not book-knowledge only that's worthy of praise. You may live to your fourscore years; but in my judgment you'll never live to be the man your father is, nor the man your grandfather was, though neither of them could spell a word o' Latin."

A rebuke of such uncompromising vigour scorched Frank, for the time being, with burning confusion. He felt its shrewd insight, and was keenly humiliated by the view of his littlenesses through Aunt Hannah's

spectacles. What did she heed about degrees and prizes? To her he would never be anything greater than her nephew, her brother John's son—either a grateful good son, or a selfish bad son, who would take from his father all he could get to raise him in the world, and give no thanks for it.

The mild word that turns away wrath has its mission, but the sharp truth that pierces the conscience has one not less vast. Aunt Hannah dared to speak the rough things that Mary could not have spoken, that his father's dignity of character would have hindered him from speaking. They did him a benefit, and Frank respected her none the less for having had the courage to speak them. He set a watch over his lips, his looks, and recollect ed what was due to others as well as to himself. His return to kindly, affectionate ways opened all their hearts, and they strove who should do most to promote his happiness. Perhaps, as Martha said, he had a colour of complaint against them for adhering to their primitive habits of life, while setting him to climb to a level so much above them. He had no equal society at home, no young friend who could be invited to his father's table. He breakfasted with the vicar and with Doctor Cornelius, but, as he felt, "there was a difference," and he would have liked that there should be no difference but the difference of age and professional standing.

"There will be none when your way is made," Mary said, to whom alone he ventured on confession.

"There will always be a difference," rejoined Frank. "You don't know, Mary, how the world considers these things."

"Nor do I wish to know, dear; but if the difference lasts, let us hope that you may come not to care about it; it is poor philosophy to chafe against what is unalterable."

"A man's birth-mark of gentle or simple is the most important mark about him."

"If you had been born a king's son in a palace, you would have been no nearer heaven than in mother's little white chamber, Frank!"

"Ah, Mary, but I might be now ever so much nearer heaven upon earth."

Which words were a parable. Frank offered no elucidation of them, and Mary asked none; but they disquieted her not a little. "Poor Frank, can he have fallen in love—fallen in love with Miss Eleanour Trevelyan?" she reflected, and smiled at the ambition of his conceit—a far loftier ambition, measured by Pengarvon ways of thinking, than the highest flights possible to be achieved by his mere scholarship. For the Trevelyan family were of the proudest, most ancient blood in all Cornwall—were kin to lords, and dukes, and princes in the land. To Mary's unsophisticated

mind it would have seemed hardly so mad a thing had Frank cast eyes of worshipful desire on a daughter of King George in London! Now, indeed, she realised what he felt when he said "there was a difference."

There was a difference. If the good vicar, so fat, so jolly, so kindly patronising to his humble neighbour's clever son, could have conceived what sweet wild dreams were floating before Francis Gwynne's lively imagination, he would surely have invited that presumptuous youth within the sacred precincts of his house no more! But what could he suspect? Miss Eleanour was so graciously demure, so exquisitely benign, that she might have been a goddess descending! There was certainly magic about her. She bewitched Frank, she charmed him, she put him in a better humour with himself and all the world! When she was most stately, she would blush at him; when she was most reserved and dignified, there was a shy encouragement in her sunny eyes and dimples. They were just innocent boy and girl, looking love at one another, and hardly knowing it. It was just the prelude of that idyl invented in Eden, that beautiful idyl, for ever old, for ever new, without which no life of mortal man is perfect in its music!

Francis Gwynne went back to Cambridge in October, with his head full of fancies and eager aspirations, and sensible of a keener spur to win himself

honour than had ever pricked him before. He had promised Mary to read his Bible daily, and to pray more earnestly for grace to fortify him against his infirmities of temper; and she, in return, had promised to keep him a home-journal, such as she had once before begun and relinquished. He was very exact to bid her make it a record of events, not of sentiments and good counsels only, but of what she heard and saw and did, of who went and came in the town, and so forth. He would not speak more plainly, even to her; but Mary was quite aware of his meaning—it was the rising and setting of his sun, his moon, his bright particular star at the vicarage, that he was so precise to know!

And Mary doubted painfully the wisdom of being her messenger. She hoped that in the multiplicity of his occupations Frank would have no leisure for idle dreams, and that in the length of his absence her idea would wear out of his mind. She wrote her journal, therefore, with a drag on her pen, and the first portion that she had an opportunity of transmitting to Cambridge surprised him by its dulness. He received it during the Christmas holidays, and told her in reply that it was a poor return for the good news he had to send home, namely, that in the examinations of his college which were just concluded, he had come out *first*.

These tidings pleased his father prodigiously, and

rejoiced all his friends. Mary carried the letter that brought them, first to Doctor Cornelius, and then to Doctor Trevelyan. The vicar, as it happened, was abroad on a pastoral round, but Miss Eleanour ran down from her sitting-room, and entreated Mary to come in and let *her* read the letter: "For indeed," says she, pressing her rosy palms together, "we are one as interested as the other to learn all that is pleasant concerning Frank." She called him "Frank"—she had caught it from the two old doctors, who, in discussing his progress and prospects, commonly spoke of him as "Frank," or "little Gwynne." And when she had finished the letter, which she glanced over a second time, and even a third time (in part to impress it on her memory, for her uncle, of course, though Mary said she could leave it), she exclaimed: "Tell Frank how glad I am; I should like to tell him so myself, and I would if he were near! How proud of him you must be!"

Mary sighed for fulness of heart. "We love him dearly; he is all the world to us," she said; "but we would rather have him good than great."

"He *is* good," said Eleanour. "He is *very* good: I wish I were a tithe as good! But it is not in me."

"It is in none of us by nature; it is the gift of God," says Mary.

Eleanour gazed down on the gentle preacher, and

cried, "You are a household of saints! But don't make Frank a methodist!"

"His mother was one," replied Mary; "but holiness, but Christian perfection, do not depend upon a name."

Frank had certainly earned a reward, and when Mary next took her pen to write in her journal, she felt so happy, that her thoughts flowed in a full stream, and she told him all about this interview with Miss Eleanour Trevelyan.

"January, 10, 1799.

"It was a splendid, clear morning, what I call a morning of good omen, when I awoke. There was fresh-fallen snow on the high downs, and icicles were hanging to the eaves. Robin was at my window early for his feast of crumbs; and after my prayers, the first voice I heard was my father's, crying out at the stairs foot, 'Mary, make haste and come down; here is a good letter from Frank!' Ah, my dear, what a good letter it was, and how we thanked God for it! You would have felt yourself amply repaid if you could have seen your father's proud delight—if you could have heard him say, 'I do well to have confidence in my boy; he will not disappoint me.' Aunt Hannah said we must let Martha know, and she would walk up to Berry Hill in the afternoon. My share in cir-

culating the intelligence was to carry the letter to Doctor Cornelius and the vicar.

"Doctor Cornelius was pacing the cloisters to catch him a heat in the frosty morning, and the instant I showed my face at the gate, he shouted out, 'I know; don't tell me: Frank is *first* this time!' I nodded, for joy so overcame me that I could not utter a word. The Doctor put on his spectacles, took the letter from my hand, and read it with a running commentary of, 'Good boy, good boy; I was convinced he could beat 'em all if he tried: good boy; that's right!' and I am sure if school had been in, he would have proclaimed a whole holiday. Ah, my dear, you have some excellent friends!"

"I was too late up the Church Hill to be in time for the vicar. He had gone over to Wilderspin Common to baptise a newly-born child; but Miss Eleanour Trevelyan sent word she would receive me; and indeed she came running herself to stop me, lest I should go away, as her uncle was out. And she saw I had news.

"Oh, Frank, but she is a most lovely lady; the brightest, serenest spirit that ever blessed a house, I think. She led the way to her sitting-room, upstairs, and made me rest in her own chair by the fireside. There was a rough little dog on the hearth, and in the sunshine outside her window the doves were cooing—she likes the noise for the tender melancholy of

it, she says. And this room she calls *her* cage, and it has both the air and perfume of her presence. When I look at her, I wonder no longer at the extravagant things poets write of beautiful women. And all her beauty is in herself. Her dress was scarcely more dainty than my own, and she wore no ornaments, except the scarlet ribbon in her hair, that she is so fond of. She had some Christmas roses in a bowl, with a few snowdrops and house-grown lilies, and her window-sill was green with exotic ferns. On the walls are miniatures of her father, and mother, and her two sailor brothers. She invited me to admire them, and I told her how well I recollect the victory that cost Captain Trevelyan his life, and why I recollect it. She was very gentle and sympathetic, and spoke of her brothers, who are both with the fleet, as I should speak of you, dear, if any day might bring us word that, for a bit of glory, you had lost a limb, or, for stern duty, you had given your life. Ah, Frank, there must often be a sore ache in that blithe young heart. 'We are only three, and every hour they are in peril!' she said; and then cheered suddenly, put her own thoughts by, and began to talk again of my glad tidings—for be sure they were told long before this. Twice she bade me send you her congratulations upon your good luck, wishing she could give them herself; and twice she read your letter, to remember it all for the vicar; and yet, when I was coming away,

she asked me if I could let her keep it for him to read himself, on his return; and of course I did so—the precious letter! It has done my father good: I never saw him in finer health and spirits than just now, and Aunt Hannah says the same. Thank God for it!"

Francis Gwynne had not done rejoicing over this passage of Mary's journal, which she sent to him after brief delay, when he received another letter from home—a letter from Martha's husband, giving him an account of his father's *death!* The blow fell without warning, and Frank was struck to the earth with sorrow and consternation. He lost all taste for his usual studies, and gave himself up to regrets and self-reproaches. How often had he grieved that most kind, most excellent father! How little had he honoured him as he ought! James Carden was fortunately at hand to reason with his friend, and direct him to the true source of consolation. He counselled him to make this season of trial one of retirement and serious meditation. Frank yielded to his advice, and began to read his Bible, in quest of that light and permanent satisfaction which had all at once vanished out of the sphere of his worldly desires. He was awakened to the importance of religion, and began to call himself religious; but his heart was not touched, and he found little interest in his formal devotions. The simple,

loving, trustful faith of childhood was not to be recovered in a day. By degrees he was re-absorbed in his mathematical studies, and again, at midsummer, his name stood first upon the list at the college examination. But the joy of announcing it at home was sadly diminished since the stimulus of his father's pride in him was gone. Mary's journal records how it was welcomed there with tears:—

"July 4.

"MY DEAR,—We have to thank God for mercies every day renewed. Your letter made us very glad, and yet we could not restrain our sorrow when we thought of my dear father, and how he had looked forward to this time. He spoke of it on the very morning of his death. It was an exceeding comfort to him as the hour of separation drew on, that he was leaving us provided for according to our wants, and that although your patrimony would be small, it would be sufficient to bear you through the expenses of the University, and of your law studies afterwards, if you decide upon following the law. He had made his will not many weeks before, as if unconsciously in anticipation of his sudden call—sudden, but oh, not unprepared! I can think of it now with resignation, with comfort even; for he died in the peace of God, if ever man did, and his agony was not long, though it was very sharp. And his mind was quite unclouded.

He laid his hands to bless them, on the heads of Martha's boys, and said to her, 'Don't fret, Mattie, *my* motherless lad does well!' Poor Mattie! Willie was much moved; we can see that he is anxious about her, and my father's words brought a burning hectic to her thin cheek. How like she grows to our mother! but she will not have her health talked about; she will try no remedies, and insists that she is well. She is impatient of our very carefulness, and all this adds to our pain.

"Aunt Hannah stirs about as actively as ever; but my father's death has aged her much. And how the garden has missed him this spring! you would say that it looks very forlorn if you could see it now; a neglected garden has such a desolate air. I think that plants and pets must prosper in proportion to the love we give them; and my father loved every tree and shrub and flower of his little domain. When we were considering about leaving this house in April, the garden was let go too long untended, and it has grown into a tangled wilderness. Next spring, if we live so long, we will give it timely care. Berry Hill begins to look green all about it now; the young trees are rising up, and the hedges of yew and myrtle are thickening. It used to be so bald when it was new; soon it will be quite homelike and very pretty. But I am glad my dear father died in his old house; and I am glad, too, that Aunt Hannah and I can make out

a. living in it. What should you say if you found me teaching school some day? I have thought of it; for I love little children, and my hands are often empty, and my mind wearies for occupation.

"Have you heard that Dr. Trevelyan is made a Canon of Croxton? He will have to reside there three months in the year, and his turn will come in the winter—from Christmas to the end of March, Miss Eleanour told us. She will go with him, of course; and Mr. Sargent, of Clifden, is to live at the vicarage, and do duty in his stead. I have heard that he is a good man, and an excellent preacher. But I am content with the vicar, the dear old man. He was so kind to my father, so reasonable, and sympathetic. I shall never forget his kindness in our time of trouble. To know him truly, one must see him in the house of mourning. And as for his old sermons, I am sure I like them better every time I hear them."

The ensuing six months of Francis Gwynne's life were months of severe and constant study. He put his whole heart, and soul, and strength into his work; for on the issue of the next public examination, the examination for degrees, hung the entire course of his future career. Perhaps never until now had he thoroughly known himself, his ardent ambition, his intense desire to excel, for the sake of excelling. James Carden, who was still at the University, main-

taining himself by teaching until he was of an age to take Holy Orders, warned his friend against over anxiety, as apt to produce a perturbation of spirit highly adverse to success.

"Take heed by me, little Gwynne," said the good fellow, with a rueful, sad countenance. "I was in your state of mind for ten weeks before the examination began. When I entered the Senate House, I hardly saw my way for hurry and confusion of feeling. I believe I forgot my prayers that morning—and what was the end of it? I fell more than twenty degrees below my own expectations, and made the Doctor so heartily ashamed of me that he has never asked me down to Pengarvon since."

"But how is a man to keep himself cool when everything depends upon one chance?" cried Frank.

"We are wise enough after the event. If my day were to come over again, I would resolve to do my best, and not dwell on the result. You have told me often what great things you seek for yourself—'Seek them not,' saith the Lord. Remember that sermon of Barrington's at St. Mary's last Sunday. It was just in time for you—I wish I had heard it beforehand. How wonderfully few men can preach a sermon to help us in the straits of everyday life! and I imagine that it is the same in the world as in the University."

"Because they are idle; because it is easier to

preach abstract truths in the air. They don't study human nature; they proclaim their message like the Pengarvon bellman, who stands at the corners of the streets and bawls inarticulately, while the people look one upon another and say: 'What is lost? What is found? Who can tell what he says?' Then he goes on, staring at the ground, and nobody is any the wiser."

"Don't be cynical! *You* may be the wiser for Barrington's message if you will. He quoted a grand saying, and worthy of universal acceptance: 'Man, when he resteth and assureth himself on Divine Protection and Favour, gathereth a Force and Faith which Human Nature in itself could not obtain.' Believe it, little Gwynne; rid yourself of your excessive solicitude, and while you pray for a blessing on your endeavours, trust your ends to God. I have finished my sermon."

Frank laid it to heart, and it bore its fruit of excellency. When the first critical day of the examinations arrived, he went into the presence of the examiners as quiet and collected in mind as he would have gone to morning chapel. Carden was far more anxious and unsettled during the interval of suspense than his friend. Much was expected of Gwynne; his reputation for ability and industry stood very high, but a large number of able young men, whose friends thought equally well of them, were his competitors.

Complete success was, however, his destined good fortune. The highest academical honour, that of Senior Wrangler, was awarded to him, and that long thought of his youth was accomplished!

Carden came to congratulate him. A proof that the friendship of the two young men had a solid foundation was that no poverty, no failure or glory shook it. Frank recognised in his elder companion a more noble principle of life than he had yet reached up to, and a scholarship as deserving as his own, though it had not been crowned; and Carden maintained over the clever lad, whose name for a day was in all men's mouths, the superiority and affectionate watchfulness belonging to his more stable character, out of which their attachment had originally sprung.

Frank was alone in his room when Carden entered. His fire was low, his lamp was not lighted, the January twilight was stealing greyly through the bleak trees. Three letters lay on the table ready for the post: one to Mary, one to Doctor Cornelius, one to Doctor Trevelyan at Croxton. Carden stept up to Frank, who sat with his back to the door, and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"Well, little Gwynne!" says he, in the tenderest glad voice.

"Vanity of vanities!" replies Frank; and by the dim twinkling of the fire Carden saw that there were tears in his eyes. They shook hands, and by-and-by

they began to talk. "I am satisfied—and I don't care," ejaculated the hero of the day, with a heavy sigh.

"Wait till to-morrow," said Carden. "To-night's 'don't care' signifies no more than the reaction of weariness after excitement. You have had all the rest congratulating you, of course?"

"Yes, but I missed *you*. And I wish my father had lived, Carden."

"I wish mine had! I think he would have loved his son unlucky."

"There is nothing here without its flaw! My father would have been so glad and proud—the others will not much mind."

"Yes, they will mind—Mary will cry for joy, for she is a good soul, and devoted to you. To be Senior Wrangler bears looking at in all lights. It is an honour of honours, and blamelessly won, as I know it will be blamelessly, even nobly, worn."

"Thank you, Carden!" cried Frank, and stretched out his hand for another grasp of his friend's. "It does one good to be believed in. Doctor Cornelius will toss up his cap, and give the school a holiday."

"I should think so, indeed! They ought to write your name in letters of gold—they will certainly carve it on the high desk, and that will last longer. I should not wonder if they set the church bells a-ringing."

Frank laughed at the conceited notion. "The Vicar is not at home," said he. "He is at Croxton."

"Was there ever a Pengarvon lad Senior Wrangler before? Never, that I heard of?"

"Enough said, Carden; let it alone! I have attained to the highest wish of my ambition, and I feel that I have grasped a shadow."

"You will find out that substantial rewards follow it. It is to the lot of men who lay hold of such shadows that the great prizes of life fall."

"I know one prize that I could long for—but it is far above, out of my reach."

"I would not think so were I Francis Gwynne."

The friends understood one another, and were silent.

V.

Eleanour's Parlour at Croxton.

FIFTY, sixty, seventy years ago, the main features of Croxton Close must have been very much the same as they are to-day. The clear shallow river where the trout glance from light to shade, half circles the cathedral precincts as it always did, but it has been taught to keep within bounds, and no longer floods the green lawns at the spring freshets and the melting of the winter snows. The two cedars are of centuries' growth, so are the elms, the great beeches. The houses that stand about it in placid dignity have an air of days long past—of Tudor days some of them, but more of the days of Queen Anne and the first and second Georges.

Canon Trevelyan's fronted upon the Close, and had a garden behind, sloping down to the river. It was one of the oldest residences, with many disused and ruinous chambers, and two tiers of blind dormers in the steep roof. He had inherited it from his predecessor, with its scant furniture, dark panelled walls, vast stone mullions, lozenge-glazed windows, and open

hearths untouched by the profane finger of improvement; and as it had suited Canon Mereweather, so it would have admirably suited Canon Trevelyan.

But there was Mistress Eleanour to please, and youth loves a little brightness, a little show. When she was first introduced to her new abode, Eleanour paced the long echoing rooms, and affected to feel them haunted. There was the great parlour, forty feet from end to end, with a deep bay commanding a south-west view of the cathedral and the spire, and opposite it another bay, from which she looked across the river to beautiful meadows where cattle were feeding, and to the low rounded hills, dotted with sheep, that encompass the city. It was a very picture of an old state parlour; but mediævalism was just now terribly out of fashion. She gave the Canon up all the rest of the house, but this parlour *must* be painted. It was her domain; and painted it was, in exquisite barbarous taste, high carved chimney and all, a delicate pink. Then the dusky woollen draperies that had been crimson once, gave place to parti-coloured chintz, painted with pagodas, Chinese figures, and impossible plants, after the manner of the willow-patterned plate then in vogue; and the formal settees and chairs had fresh covers, also needle-wrought, and in equally impossible flowers. With the well-rubbed Wilton carpet Eleanour had to be content, for the Canon vowed he could buy her no other; and after all her devices to

spoil it, my lady's parlour was very charming when my lady was in it, whether at morning when the sun was on the garden, or at evening when the western glory was on the Close.

But perhaps the pleasantest hour of the day, in that leafless, flowerless season, was the time when it was dusk and not yet candle-light; when the fire glowed and blazed, and threw grotesque dancing shadows on the pale walls, and the heavy boughs of the trees outside tossed and swayed in the wind as if they were fighting together. That was Eleanour's favourite time, when she and the Canon came in from prayers, and brought a friend home, perhaps two or three friends, for a talk before they went to dinner.

In her parlour at that hour was always to be found the London Paper, and besides the London Paper, with its then-a-days very serious annals of the world, were to be found new books, the newest in the Close. They were Eleanour's pet luxury, her protest against everlasting worsted-work and everlasting personal chat. The ladies of her acquaintance called her "a bit of blue," but Eleanour never minded—she was never dull, and they often were; she had a spirit and a will of her own, and followed her tastes and caprices with a lively, gay independence that they wondered at and condemned, but which, it must be confessed, made her a very fascinating companion to her friends of the other sex; and to have the *entrée* of Miss Trevelyan's

parlour at the twilight time, for talk, was counted by them an honour for which the most grave and reverend might be thankful.

It happened on a certain February afternoon that she went in from evening prayers alone. It was blustering cold weather, and she left the Canon to follow, which he presently did, bringing with him the Dean and one of the younger clergy, Mr. Arthur Temple. Eleanour had her chair and tea-table near the fire, within the great folding Japanese screen, and looked the prettiest picture of domestic cosiness as she bade them all welcome. They had arrived in full discussion of the last public news—Pitt's letter to the king in favour of the Catholic claims. The Dean and the Canon were very hot against the minister, but they had confidence in the king that he would maintain the Protestant ascendancy intact. Mr. Temple respectfully demurred. He believed that the time was at hand when religious disabilities *must* be relaxed, and when men of all shades of opinion would insist on their right to be represented in Parliament.

"Young sir," cried the Dean, "you will be a grey-headed man before they will get what you are pleased to call their rights! *We* shall not give way, and the king—God bless him!—will not give way!"

Eleanour dispensed her cups of tea to cheer the disputants. She loved a good argument, but took dis-

creet care to keep clear of the hard blows that were always going when Church politics were the battle. The contest was at its hottest when the door opened, and old John—the butler, evidently, by the air of him—announced another visitor, though no name was audible.

“Who, who?” whispered the Canon to Eleanour, aside, raising his hand to silence Temple, who was very loud and sonorous—perhaps to make up for being one against two and a neutral in the wordy strife.

It was quite dusk at the door; but Eleanour had quick, discerning eyes. “It is Frank!” said she, softly, and set down her cup. The Canon recognised him almost at the same moment.

“Bless my heart! it is little Gwynne. Mr. Dean, allow me; Temple, this is our Senior Wrangler!” cried he, and shook Frank’s hand until it ached again.

“Proud to make your acquaintance, sir, and to offer you my congratulations,” said the Dean, himself a first-class man, and with a fellow-feeling for scholars of humble origin.

Eleanour was all blushes when the Canon suggested that they should have a little more light on the scene, and applied a taper to the wax-candles on the chimney. Mr. Temple noted the brilliance of pleasure

in her eyes, and the deepened roses of her face, and then looked at the new-comer with a perplexed scrutiny. Frank seemed excited too, and not altogether at his ease; but that might be accounted for by his abrupt introduction into the presence of so many and great dignitaries. Thus Temple reasoned, and there was nothing else in Frank's manners or person that the most fastidious could take exception to. He had a beautiful animated countenance—youthful for a Senior Wrangler, being yet not quite twenty years old—a refined countenance, though one of marked power. He wore no beard, and his hair curled over his head in close crisp curls; his eyes were dark grey, very clear, with a certain melancholy which was almost gloom when his mouth was in repose. He was not above the middle height, but his figure, his gait, his air were elegant, distinguished as Temple's own; and Temple was a young gentleman of family and of the finest breeding, quite the fine gentleman of the Close.

The Canon enquired of Frank how he came to be at Croxton. Frank said he was on his way to Pengerhon, and that he had turned a little out of it to visit the Cathedral. Eleanour smiled, and reflected on his cunning. Would he have been there for the cathedral's sake only?

“Where are you putting up? You must dine with

us to-night. Dean, will you dine with us to-night too? Temple, will you dine?" said the Canon, overflowing with hospitality.

But the Dean could not, and Mr. Temple would not (though he was sorry the next moment after he refused). Neither Frank nor Eleanour, however, regretted the prospect of a long evening without other witnesses than the dear old Canon, who was always sleepy after dinner, and would probably not have been able to keep awake if he had been entertaining his bishop. They had not met for nearly two years, and yet, all at once, the unexpressed sentiment of pleasing one another was revived. An unwonted softness came over Eleanour as she listened to Frank, and spoke now and then a word. She was never so winning as with him; she was herself, and sweeter, more humble than herself. Frank felt this, and retained his deference towards her quite unchanged, though he stood more as a man towards her uncle, in the proper confidence of the rank that he had achieved for himself. His little rusticities had worn off in the friction of the schools, he had practised himself in polite behaviour; and the Canon was wise, kind man of the world enough to forget, with the guest at his table, whatever it might have made him uneasy to remember. And some occult feeling taught Eleanour to be gracious now, without the air of condescending. Altogether, it was an evening in the young scholar's life to be

looked back upon with entire calmness, entire satisfaction.

If Mr. Temple had been there, Eleanour's too critical acquaintances might have said that she had arrayed herself for conquest. The most beautiful woman knows that she is more charming to the eye for being beautifully dressed. Perhaps the fashions of that day would appear quaint and unbecoming now, but a lovely person is lovely always, and Eleanour had a taste and tact besides, that gave to her clinging Indian muslins and soft taffetas an air of perfect grace and fitness. Francis Gwynne was not competent to form a judgment on the costliness of her lace and gewgaws, but she seemed as bright a vision to him as any lady of the old poets, and he felt himself exalted and exhilarated by the mere breath of her presence.

The trio dined in the Canon's parlour, and then repaired again to Eleanour's, to the little circle within the screen, where the Canon preferred to take his moderate glass of old port wine, and his nap after, by way of being company to his fair housekeeper. He dozed off, as usual, very soon, and the cheerful low hum of the two young voices did not disturb him.

"Do they know at Pengarvon that you are on your road home? How happy Miss Mary will be! I am so glad you have come to Croxton, else we might have missed you. We are to go to town in April;

and it will be quite late in the summer before we are back at the vicarage. I am fond of change and variety; it keeps us alive. Have you ever been in London, Mr. Gwynne?" says Eleanour, in her quick, bright manner.

"No," says Frank. "I have no friends there. My friends are all at Pengarvon and at Cambridge."

"Do you not include us at Croxton?" cries Eleanour.

"Ah, yes! but I have always counted you amongst the Pengarvon folks—my first and fastest friends. I have always thought of you at home."

"I do not call the vicarage *home*; Croxton is home to me. I was brought up here till I was twelve years old. I lived with Aunt Bell in the corner house as you come in at the Close Gate. Since then she and Uncle Trevelyan share me between them. We shall be more at Croxton than at Pengarvon, now he is Canon; I should not wonder if we remained here altogether, as he grows old and disinclined to travel."

"Do you prefer it? Do you like a life in town?"

"I like to be within easy access to books, news, and agreeable company. We have not much at Pengarvon, and it is dull and formal besides. My visit to London will be my first plunge into the world of great society. We are to stay with my Aunt Hard-

wicke; you know that Sir George Hardwicke is in the Ministry, a friend of Mr. Pitt's. It will be delightful. There are so many things I wish to hear and see—the new opera and the play! And I want to meet some of the famous men of the time, and to go to court *once* at least. As Aunt Bell says, we cannot be young twice, and it is when we are young that we enjoy these things. Oh, I have a great curiosity!"

"You will become quite a woman of the world," says Frank, laughing at her pleasantly.

"You don't think it wrong? Are you calling me frivolous in your private mind?" cried Eleanour.

"I should not tell you if I were! Am not I young too? Have I had a surfeit of pleasure, that I should hate it? Just now I am tired of work, and am longing for play."

"I like to hear you confess it! That brings us nearer on a level; *now* I shall not feel in awe of you! Have you forgotten your doves? I did not bring them to Croxton, because I could not have carried them to London. Your kind sister Mary has them in charge, so they are well cared for. They belong to the vicarage. I have my companions that I leave there, and my companions that I bring away: my miniatures and my pet books of piety, *they* never stay behind; but my doves, pretty creatures, and my wee Scotch dog, are happier to be still in one place. I should like to ask

a favour of you, if you would not mind—it is to take my dog out for a walk now and then; he would so appreciate the attention, and I should too. It troubles me to think sometimes how dull he must be."

Frank was delighted to grant this modest request. He recollects the old adage, and was quite ready to love Eleanour's dog for Eleanour's own sake; he was sure, besides, that Sandy would be excellent company.

"Sandy is the shrewdest of his kind; he will know in an instant whether you are to be friends or not," says Eleanour. "His opinion of strangers has the greatest weight with me—I always ask him what he thinks. His preferences are strong, so are his prejudices. On the whole, dogs have quite as much character as men, and more disinterestedness and fidelity."

"Where have you come by that knowledge?" asks Frank. "By hearsay, or is it the bitter fruit of experience?"

Eleanour blushed: it was by hearsay surely, for experience of that sort she had none.

Frank's eyes upon her were lively and penetrating. "I will not impugn Sandy's devotion—he would be a sad dog indeed not to love so dear a mistress! But perhaps you know him better than you know men?

Perhaps you will change your mind about our disinterestedness and fidelity when you have proved us longer. I feel some little capacity within myself for the exercise of those canine virtues."

"I was talking nonsense, trying to sound wise! forget that I said it," pleaded Eleanour, laughing yet shame-faced. "And it was ungrateful of me, for what have I ever really known but kindness?"

"And what has Sandy ever known but kindness?" rejoined Frank. "What trials have you put him to? Have you brought in another dog to dispute his mat, to snatch his bone, to steal your caresses? A truce to Sandy's disinterestedness! Any dog would be faithful on such terms—the greediest dog alive would feel that it was impossible to better himself! If you would use me only half as kindly, I would promise never to swerve in thought, word, or deed from your good service!"

"Now it is you who are talking nonsense! It is time my uncle awoke," says Eleanour; and thereupon ensued a silence. The silence effected what the continuous talk had failed to do; the Canon roused up with that air of surprise common to people who have slept in company, and enquired the time.

The clock in the Close struck ten soon after, but the wind blew the sound about, and they heard only a wandering echo of it. It was a terrible night

for rain too, and Frank shuddered that he must face it.

"We shall see you in the morning," said the Canon, as the young man was on the point to go. "You are at the White Hart, of course?"

Frank had left the parlour, and old John was lending him a hand with his cloak—not too warm a cloak considering the weather—when Eleanour came into the hall, a little hesitating, a little shy, with a thick Scotch plaid unfolded in her two hands. "Mr. Gwynne," says she, "I wish you would wrap this plaid about you—suppose I am Mary, bidding you take care of yourself."

Frank would have put it on if it had been a thread of gossamer! Old John, a shrewd, apple-faced man, who for thirty years and more had held the office of butler to Canon Mereweather, and had passed with the house into the service of Canon Trevelyan, made a note of the young lady's goodness—but she was always good to the humble and poor, and Mr. Gwynne's clothes were not fine broad cloth like Mr. Temple's—Mr. Temple might have been wet through and through before she would have fetched him a plaid!

It was no fault of Frank's clothes, however, that had caused Eleanour to bring him a comforter; it was just that inspiration to do a kind act which is some

women's first way of loving. And high and mighty degree as Frank had taken amongst men, there was left about him much of that simple dependence upon the thoughtfulness of women, which they adore in their heroes, sages, and masters. Two lighter, happier, more innocent hearts than theirs did not beat as they said "good-night," with the bitter blast whistling in at the chink of the door, which old John, with the latch up, held by main force.

"You will be blown away!" cried Eleanour, as Frank disappeared into the dark and the cold, and then she ran back into her delicious parlour, and knelt before the fire to warm herself again.

Meanwhile, what a hurly-burly it was in the Close! What a tumult of wind and echoes, of creaking, groaning, crashing trees! The oil-lamp hanging under the gate was a dim beacon through the driving clouds of rain and sleet. Frank steered for it, the breath nearly beaten out of him, and ankle-deep in water, washing heavily to and fro. He could see it gleam as by a weird light of its own, and knew that the river was out, and a great flood rising.

Within and without! The contrast struck all at once upon the young man's heart, as if there were some mysterious revelation and foreshadowing in it. He was alone in the storm. The vast rock of the church rose black in the darkness. The window-

shine of the shelter he had left was lost to sight. A sense of great solitude compassed him about, but no weakness, no failure of spirit came with it. Instead, a sudden, strong impulse of courage, resistance, endurance, inspired him, and his whole soul sprang heavenwards in an ecstasy of prayer: "If it be so, God, dear God, give me strength to persevere to the end!"

All night long the heavens rained upon the earth, and a waste of waters, covering the Close and the meadows, was what Eleanour Trevelyan looked out upon in the morning. Against the deep foundations of the old Tudor house, the black flood lapped in vain, as vainly as it lapped against the buttressed walls of the cathedral; but in the poor parts of the city there was desolation, and mourning, and woe. Eleanour had never beheld such a dreary scene as that presented before her parlour window. She said so to the friendly grey-headed servant who was engaged spreading the breakfast-table within the screen.

"It *is* a great flood," calmly acquiesced old John. "I don't remember that I ever see the river rise so high in a single night, unless it was once when I was a boy, a chorister in Dean Helston's time. We rowed right into the church, and up the nave, in a flat-bottomed boat—they may do it again to-day, and they'll *have* to do it, them that means to attend service."

Most winters we have the Close partly under water—it always was so since I recollect. There's been a talk of altering it; but how they are to alter it, when it is in the nature of things, beats *me!* It is God, I say, as made rivers so, and it would be a flying in His face to try and hinder 'em overflowing. Surely there's a good purpose in it; if for nothing else, it makes folks clean out their houses after."

"But there must be some sad accidents when the flood comes down so fast," said Eleanour.

"The sheep is safe on the hills, and the cattle they mostly find a bit of high ground till they are reskyed. The Avon here ain't like one o' them rivers that the tide runs up; it is just the rains that swells it, and the little streams full o' trout that anglers is so fond of. I'm not denying that damage there is, and loss too among the folk in Briggate, and such low-lived places; but the damage pays itself, I say. And if it did *not*, why, it is in the natur' of things that floods should be, and what we've all got to do is to bide them till they go down."

Old John, with that stout timbered roof over his head, and that oaken floor under his feet, might "bide them" without strain on his philosophy; but Francis Gwynne's heart ached and burned at the sights of sorrow he witnessed amongst the working poor people in the water-lanes of the city, between whom and

misery, at the best of times, there was never more than a handsbreadth of luck. For the first time in his life the infinite suffering of men was borne in upon his consciousness as the motive force of an infinite pity. What could he do to help them? He forgot Eleanour in her fine parlour, in her delicate atmosphere of comfort, and toiled all the day amongst other toilers, striving to stem the visitation of God. They remembered there for long after, when the story of the great flood was told, how a stranger had appeared amongst them, to succour them, whose name they never knew, and whose beautiful, Divinely compassionate face they never saw again; and to show how legends are born, some of the superstitious-pious folk added to the tale a moral, saying that this stranger was a Saint of God, who in former times had protected the city in seasons of dire calamity, such as war, famine, and plague; and that in the future days of necessity he might be looked for again—all which had a fashion of truth in it for those that could understand. The good little children of Croxton believe it firmly; it is one of their favourite stories.

The rain had ceased, and about noon the sun broke forth brilliantly upon the rippled lake over-spreading the Close. By-and-bye there were several boats to be seen punting about, some for business, perhaps, more for the fun of it. Eleanour did not

leave the house, though a lively party of young friends came to tempt her. She expected Frank, and wondered why he did not arrive—there were means and expedients enough. Mr. Temple caused himself to be landed at the garden steps, and entertained her and the Canon for an hour with details of the disasters in the city, some of them highly ludicrous to those of a ludicrous turn; but Eleanour had too vividly tender an imagination to laugh much at the tragically humorous representations he gave of a widow crying over her drowned pig, and a notorious old miserly beggar groping in the ruins of his swamped hovel for his lost hoard of copper coins.

Mr. Temple was, however, good-natured; and though his best stories evidently missed fire, and failed to amuse Miss Trevelyan, at her request, when his boat picked him up again, he went to the corner house near the gate to enquire for Aunt Bell. Aunt Bell was suffering from ennui, like her niece; but she expected no visitor, and being a lady of spirit, in view of her opportunity she made a hasty toilette and packing up, and came off with her punctilious waiting-woman to spend the rest of the day at the Canon's house, and the night too, if Eleanour asked her, which, of course, she would.

“We shall tell it for an adventure that I once came to visit you in a boat—that boats plied about the Close from house to house, and nobody will believe

us; for after this, my dear, something *must* be done," cried Aunt Bell, with joyous vivacity at finding herself in Eleanour's parlour. "Something *must* be done! the river *must* be deepened, or widened, or drained; we cannot risk half the city being drowned in their beds, like this, every winter. Do you know, that the crazy wooden structure below the bridge, where those poor French refugees who make paper flowers lived, has been washed away? They might all have been lost! So dreadful!"

Eleanour made her sprightly relative at home within the screen, and set forth her own embroidery frame to catch the window-light. In the early years of this century, all ladies occupied more or less of their day at needle-craft. Aunt Bell brought out her tatting, a dainty work whose fashion has lately come round again, and at which you may see fingers of all ages busy. Thus sociably disposed, they glided from the discussion of Eleanour's abnormal silk blossoms on white satin, to personal chat, Eleanour with one ear bent all the time towards the garden steps, listening for voices, for the bump of boats, for anything that might announce the advent she waited for.

Waited for in vain! The afternoon passed all too quickly! The sun vanished from the watery world out of doors, and old John coming in to replenish the fire, took the privilege of remarking that, with the

promise of a fine night such as there was, there would not be much of the flood left when they got up to-morrow morning. As it grew dusk, hands grew idle, and even tongues ceased. Aunt Bell drowsed in her chair, and Eleanour paced softly up and down the room, meditative, inclining to melancholy. After the storm, what a dead, dead calm! Every minute twig of the leafless trees in the Close was still and clear as a pencil stroke on the faint blue of the air. The mass of the great church was distinct in every line, angle, crocket, pinnacle. A little while, and it faded into universal shadow; the reflected yellow of the sunset lingered upon the spire some minutes later, and then faded too.

The cheering time of night, with curtains drawn and dark shut out, was not long in coming.

"By the bye, Nelly, little Gwynne has not been here to-day! I hope he has not left Croxton; I wanted to see him before he goes," said the Canon, pausing, with sudden recollection, in the act of pouring out a glass of wine at dinner.

"Who is little Gwynne?" enquired Aunt Bell—Eleanour not being prompt with a reply.

"A Pengarvon genius, the last Senior Wrangler, a humble protégé of Nelly's," replied the Canon.

Eleanour reddened with vexed amazement, and ex-

claimed that indeed Mr. Gwynne was no protégé of hers!

"Why, my dear, I thought you were extremely interested in him," said her uncle. "You have talked of nobody else these weeks past."

"Of course we have both been extremely interested in him, but it does not follow that he is indebted to us. He has had no patron but his own wit, Aunt Bell. A humble protégé sounds like a charity scholar! He once gave me a pair of doves, and he has come to breakfast at the vicarage now and then. I know his sister Mary, who is a very good woman; and that is the sum of our acquaintance."

"Oh, that is the sum of your acquaintance, is it?" said Aunt Bell, drily. The Canon said nothing.

Eleanour felt as many another inexperienced, quick-tempered young woman has done, that her very denial of a particular fact was the beginning of its positive revelation to shrewd observers. The Canon would have kept his own counsel, and also his guard upon her; but Aunt Bell had none of that discretion, that staying power, in which consists so much of the superior strength of men. No sooner was the Canon safely asleep after dinner, than the good, impatient lady began to catechise her niece concerning this young genius of Pengarvon, of whom her worthy brother spoke as "Little Gwynne."

"I suppose he is a gentleman, the son of a gentleman?" suggested she, perfectly sure in her own mind that he was *not*, from Eleanour's apology.

Eleanour looked her aunt benignly in the face, being quite her match in harmless feminine deceits, and said, No; Mr. Gwynne was not a man of family. His father had been inspector of the Pengarvon mines in his latter years; but she believed that in his youth he had been himself a miner.

"And little Gwynne being a clever lad, his friends have educated him out of his station. The democracy will assuredly seize the upper hand in England, as they have done in France, if we don't take care!"

"It will be for a very different reason then."

"Senior Wrangler, the Canon said he was—a wonderful degree for him to have taken! But mathematics are not famous for communicating polish of manner. Your uncle Bell was one of the most absent and awkward of men in society, though he *was* of good birth; and *he* was a Wrangler. Still, no one could call him underbred, for blood will tell, my dear; and he was the best creature that ever stepped—the kindest heart! But he would never have risen high in the Church, however long he might have lived, because he was not fashioned to the ways of the world. Little Gwynne may be ambitious; but

there needs more than scholarship to buoy a man up into great place. Arthur Temple is the man to succeed in life; he is well-born, of a fine presence, courtly manners, and proved ability. Ah! Nelly, if you would but look graciously on *him!*"

"But if I do not *feel* graciously," rejoined Eleanour, with the sweetest good-humour, and passed by every mistaken implication of her aunt's long speech.

"I think you *might* if you *tried*, dear. Arthur Temple is an excellent person—no Methodist, I grant you, but sound, sincere, and practical in his religion. And the esteem in which he holds you is plain; a very little encouragement would ripen it into a real affection. Consider, Nelly, it is not worldliness I am preaching to you."

Eleanour was not so sure of this last testimony. "You do not intend it for worldliness, but it has a hollow ring to my ears," said she. "Listen, dear; your handsome, lucky friend fails to stir either my sympathy or my vanity. I hope to fall in love some day; but I am certainly not in love with him, and never shall be. It would be sheer coquetry if I were to give him what you call 'encouragement.' I must not do it."

Aunt Bell was visibly chagrined. "You have spoken well, niece," said she, in a sharper tone than her wont; "well and wisely. Keep your conscience

always as bright, and you will not fall in love unworthily."

"That shall I not: I only fear that I may look too high," said Eleanour; and they were uncomfortably silent, with the oppressive sense of a two-fold meaning between them, that, for quite opposite reasons, both felt was best unexplained.

Old John's cautious prediction was verified. In the morning the Close was green again, and the swamp that the flood had left it promised, in a few hours more, to be an ice-field; for a bitter north-east wind had begun to blow, and the pools and rivulets were all whitening and crisping under its keen frosty breath.

"It is the coldest day of the winter, quite the coldest day of the winter!" cried Aunt Bell, cowering within the screen, her teeth a-chatter, her fair, wrinkled skin blue as a whetstone. Eleanour received her with a kiss and cordial embrace of her young arms. She had quite forgotten their little tiff of last night; they were excellent friends at heart, as two such genuine women could not fail to be.

The Canon was the last down to breakfast. He came into the room cheerily, rubbing his fat hands, and saying to old John, who held the door open for him to pass, "He has not come, then?"

"Mr. Gwynne, sir, will wait upon you at nine o'clock."

"Then he will be here in five minutes. Nelly, I have sent to the White Hart, to bid little Gwynne come across to breakfast. Get your talk over quickly, if you have any errands for him in Pengarvon, because he must see the cathedral, as it was *that* he came to Croxton for. He was not there yesterday. Giles says no stranger was there."

"What could he have been about all day, then?" speculated Eleanour.

"Sitting by the fireside, with a book, afraid to wet his feet, most likely; that is what I should expect a mathematician to be about, with a flood upon the earth," said Aunt Bell.

The Canon laughed, and remarked that he should not wonder if his sagacious sister was right; and while he was yet speaking there was a noise of feet in the hall, and old John ushered in the expected guest.

A cold morning is more becoming to active young men than to ladies whose bloom is past. Francis Gwynne glowed with his rapid walk, and Eleanour glowed too at the genial, pleasant manner of him, while apologising to the Canon for his absence the previous day; which, however, he did not explain. He had brought Eleanour's plaid over his arm to restore to her, and he confessed that he gave it up with reluctance. "For," said he, "on the box-seat of the coach, which is my privilege, I shall have the full

benefit of this cruel north-easter. Yes, my place is taken by the eleven o'clock coach to-day."

"Then keep my plaid," said Eleanour, boldly. "I gladly make you a present of it, such an old thing as it is."

"Is it an old thing? I shall value it the more for that! It is a very comfortable old thing," replied Frank, stroking it with his open hand caressingly, and then hanging it on the back of his chair, with so ready and merry an acceptance that the severest of parents and guardians could not have taken umbrage at the transaction.

Aunt Bell's countenance had relaxed unconsciously from the moment of Frank's entrance into the room. His face was indeed a capital letter of introduction. She insisted upon talking to him; she let him know that her lamented husband had emulated his success at Cambridge, and had not fallen far short of it; that he had died while still young, of an inflammatory cold, which she should always say had been caught in the cathedral. "The very dampest, draughtiest, most neglected cathedral in the kingdom," she averred. "But after yesterday, Canon, we *must* have an alteration. For twenty years we have been talking of it, and *now* something must be done."

"Set the young men to work," suggested the Canon, gaily. "There is a foolish prejudice in favour of grey hairs, but I believe in young people. They have the

beautiful faith, ignorance, and courage necessary to vast undertakings. Ten thousand pounds might be spent on Croxton Cathedral, and yet leave much undone."

Frank and Eleanour were both flattered by the Canon's declaration of confidence in young people; they felt its reasonableness, for they had a large confidence in themselves. "Is your Dean past interest in his noble cathedral?" said Frank.

"We are all old men—things will last our day," rejoined the Canon, half jestingly.

"They will not if we have such a flood as this every winter!" cried Aunt Bell.

"Ah, Caroline, my dear, such a flood comes at most twice in a life-time. Old John has been reckoning that it is forty-three years since the river rose as high as it did last night. You and I cannot expect to see it again."

"I shall talk to Mr. Temple. He has energy enough, and influence too, if he will use it."

"Talk to Temple as much as you please. He is young—he may survive till the next flood."

"I shall urge him to set on foot a scheme for draining the Close. We will not wait for the next flood. And when that is done, we will have Nash or Wyatt or somebody else down to give us an estimate for the restoration of the building."

"Tis a pity, my dear, that you are not Bishop, Dean, and Chapter!"

"I shall adhere to Aunt Bell's party," announced Eleanour. "I don't like plodding in worn-out paths, and letting the world go to wrack and ruin all about one. Let us have a new era and a revival."

The clock in the Close struck. "A quarter to ten, and there is the prayer-bell, Gwynne," quoth the Canon. "If you are to see the cathedral, now is your time, before service begins."

In an instant Frank was on his feet, and was bidding the two ladies good-bye.

"I had twenty messages for Pengarvon, but I must sum them all up in one—that I have forgotten none of my friends," said Eleanour, with her winning, sweet smile, as they shook hands.

Frank wound his plaid about him. "It is better so," said Aunt Bell, and interfered to help him arrange it Scotch fashion. "You will find that warmer and more secure."

"Are you ready? Come, come!" cried the Canon, from the hall, where old John was assisting him with his overcoat.

Frank gave Eleanour a last look as he ran down the steps—a look that warmed all her face with a blush—a look that made her idle, happy, and abstracted for ever so long after!

Aunt Bell intercepted it, and was thankful he was

gone, and was not likely to come soon again in Eleanour's way. The experienced lady's reflection was that, of course, the happiness of her niece must be her first desire, and she had never known happiness to come yet of an unequal attachment.

They, natural young people, had not begun to reflect. They were only beginning to find out what it was to love—that most blissful, most ignorant state of existence!

VI.

Francis Gwynne's Vocation.

FRANCIS GWYNNE's return to Pengarvon, after his grand success, was more triumphant than the last, but it was scarcely more edifying. His old master, Doctor Cornelius, and all his friends, were proud and joyful in their congratulations, and predicted for him wonderful things in the future; but he sorely missed his father's fervent welcome, and he found the old home, with only two women in it, dull, solitary, melancholy! A variable mood of depression and indifference ensued—not, perhaps, to be laid entirely to his fault. Aunt Hannah was become a grave picture of silence. Mary was much less eager to know about his honours, hopes, and cares than she was to be assured of his progress in godliness. Her hearty sympathy and interest were not to be bespoken for any successes of this world. She was of a deeply contemplative disposition, and whatever subject they began upon, she very soon contrived to merge in talk of things unseen. Religion had become now her whole existence. Frank felt the beauty, the purity of her life, but he felt also the futility, the undesirableness of trying to make his

own a mere copy of it. His emotions were with the Divine example of Christian men, not only his intellectual assent, and he was striving, and desiring to strive, to bring his practice into conformity with Christ's; but he did not acknowledge that to seek a good share in the world was against it. He required more in religion, and discerned more, than a medium for the calm collectedness and sober resignation that made his sweet sister's heaven upon earth. It was the difference between the man's nature and the woman's nature, and Frank comprehended Mary's more thoroughly than she was able to comprehend his. Her love was the perfect love that says: "Lord, let me sit at Thy feet!" his the growing faith that needs work to do for God and man to strengthen and mature it.

"It is by the highway of the holy cross, by defeat, humiliation, sorrow, that we are brought to God," Mary preached with a gentle, firm persistence, as one who could not be moved.

Frank, in the vigour of hope, the courage of success, naturally refused the doctrine of the pale, nun-like recluse; and when she continued to grieve for the root of pride in him, which might turn to a root of bitterness, he answered her: "Let be, then! God fulfils Himself in many ways. I do not set my mind against Him; I am willing to be led—He will lead me by the path that it is best for me to go."

And Aunt Hannah took his part. "Don't fret for him, Mary; his heart is right—he will do more when he knows more and loves more. He is aiming after Christian perfection; he has found out that the world cannot satisfy the wants of an immortal soul. You are wiser in religion, further advanced in the practice of piety, than he; but consider, my dear, how much longer you have been learning!"

Mary put away from her all praise; only herself knew by how much she fell short of her standard; and henceforward she endeavoured to keep her anxiety for her dear young brother within bounds, and to conceal what she could not but suffer. They had many delightful hours of converse together, and Frank loved Mary with perfect esteem and trust; but it is doubtful whether he was not more at his ease at Berry Hill, where his sister Martha made much of him for his success' sake, and never tired of hearing him tell over his plans and experiences, and where also he had the daily relief of Mr. Murchison's society.

He returned to Cambridge in the summer, and spent the Long Vacation there. James Carden had taken orders the previous Easter, and was gone to serve a curacy four miles from the town. No other friend or close acquaintance was left him at the end of term, and, being of necessity much alone, he often fell back on religious meditation in his solitary hours,

and found a blessing and a restfulness in it that he had not consciously sought. One day-dream he had besides, of endless repetition—one cherished, dear desire; and when that was wrought into his secret devotions, the name of Eleanour Trevelyan grew daily more lovely and precious. It was little enough that he had to build a hope upon; but a young lover, a lover of twenty, who has never spoken to be rebuffed, is contented with little, and his own unfettered imagination. It was good for him to worship a bright, good woman reverently: his honest passion was, in fact, half the making of him; a delightful source of inspiration, and a shield against the morbid attacks of discontent and weariness to which his nervous organisation still exposed him.

Up to this period it had been Francis Gwynne's intention to apply to the law. There were famous lawyers in those days, men risen from the ranks, whose mean birth had proved no bar against the attainment of the highest judicial dignity. What Eldon and Stowell had achieved, he might achieve also. It had long been tacitly understood amongst his friends that the law was to be his profession. What, then, was the surprise of some, and the wrath and mortification of others, when, in the autumn of this year, he gave out that he had changed his views, and felt his true vocation to be that of a minister of the Gospel!

The change had come about on this wise. The preacher at St. Mary's Church, for rather more than a year past, had been the Mr. Barrington one of whose sermons, previous to the examinations for degrees, Carden had recommended to his friend's special thought. Frank had laid it to heart with profit, and after his return from Cornwall he attended regularly on Mr. Barrington's ministry. They made each other's personal acquaintance, and Mr. Barrington could not fail to be interested and touched by the Christian humility of the successful scholar who came to learn from him more about the way of salvation. He invited Frank to his house, and introduced him to several young men of his own date who were also seeking the truth. Carden, who had been the first to convince his friend of the necessity of serious reflection, encouraged him to persevere; and the result was that Frank entered on a course of theological study as a preparation for Holy Orders.

It was to his sister Mary that Frank wrote the first intelligence of his altered mind. Mary was glad even to tears! She did not know how to thank God enough for bringing her dear brother back to his original vocation. But his sister Martha felt profoundly aggrieved, and spoke of him almost with scorn.

"Poor Frank is very unsatisfactory," she said. "Perhaps it is a mercy his father did not live; for it is cruel to be disappointed in a son for whom you

have made such sacrifices. I shall give up now expecting him ever to *be* anything or *do* anything out of the common groove. He may have plenty of book-learning in his head, but he will never make any worthy use of it, for he has neither judgment nor stability. And Willie is of my opinion too."

Martha was not the woman to keep an adverse opinion to herself, and in what she imagined to be the fulfilment of a duty imposed on her by eldership, she addressed to her brother a letter of severe expostulation and rebuke. Mary was sorry when she heard what Martha had done, and made haste to assure Frank of the general approval of his friends. She still continued at intervals the home-journal begun for him when he went first to Cambridge, and, having a present opportunity of transmitting a chapter to his hands, she added a paragraph or two which could not fail to give him pleasure.

"Nov. 10.

"MY DEAR,—I thanked God on my knees for your last happy letter! I do not say that it is impossible to serve Him as well in the world as in the Church, but I love to think that our mother's dedication of you was accepted. I have had some sweet hours of retirement, meditation, and prayer upon it, and it is most strongly borne in on my heart that what you have done will be for an everlasting blessing to you, to us,

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and to very many besides. Let this hope stay you up, if you are tempted to faint through discouragement. Since you freely relinquish your dream of great things for yourself, God will prosper your work for Him more abundantly. Believe it, dear—I believe it with my whole soul and strength!

"To my mind there is no life more enviable, more capable of the beauty of holiness, than the life of a faithful minister amidst his people. I like to think of you settled some day, not too far from home, in a rustic parsonage, surrounded by a garden, fields, hills, the sea, perhaps, in sight, and the church near at hand. Your flock will love you, look up to you on all occasions as their best friend and counsellor. There shall be no need of any lawyer in your parish, and, as it is to be a country-parish, you must be yourself something of a doctor. You shall have a pleasant, quiet study well furnished with books—I picture you to myself in such a study on such an afternoon as this! It is scarcely like November. St. Martin's summer lasts long this year. The trees are still full of leaf, yellowing, crimsoning; and amongst the russet masses are many fresh green shoots absolutely untouched by winter. It is towards five o'clock, and over the pale sky deep masses of purple cloud fly before light skirmishers, all flushed with the sunset. The landscape is bathed in a warm glow of colour—

"Here I laid down my pen to muse a minute in

contemplation of the loveliness and the glory; but my one minute has grown to many, and the dusk has overtaken me. I must finish to-morrow.

"11th.—I was going to tell you that Miss Trevelyan came to see us just as I was on the point of crossing the door-stone to go out for a walk along the cliff. This was at noon, on the very day I received your dear letter, and as yet only Aunt Hannah knew what you had written to me. Miss Trevelyan is a most kind and considerate lady; she remembered how little leisure I have now, with the children coming to school, and she insisted on walking with me, 'to pay me her visit,' she said, 'in the open air,' and she would come again at a more convenient time for her chat with Aunt Hannah.

"You will be sure that I had told her your news before we reached Spear Point. Her countenance lightened with surprise and with *pleasure*, I think, and then, I am sure, a moisture came into her eyes. After a short silence she said: 'He is *right*—I am convinced that he is right. I never could imagine your Frank standing up in a wig and gown to plead against honour and conscience, as many counsellors do. Oh, yes, I have heard them in Croxton at assize-time. And if he rose to be a judge as he certainly would, he might have to pronounce the sentence of death on poor wretches whose misery has been the occasion of their guilt. Oh, our laws are cruel, *very* cruel!' I

think she must have had some particular instance in her mind, but she did not further allude to it.

"The air was delightful and exhilarating, which made us forget the time, and walk longer than we ought to have done. I suppose we found an interest in each other's company. Miss Trevelyan spoke of her visit to London, where she seems to have enjoyed all the pleasures of a great society, and all the amusements of the town. She was dressed in a furred pelisse and hat of purple velvet, made in the first fashion, as she gaily informed me. The Canon and she go to Croxton this year before Christmas.

"As I was about parting with her at the vicarage gate, she laid her hand on my arm for a moment, and said, 'You may tell Frank from me, that lawn will become him better than scarlet, and the pastoral staff better than the sword of justice.' I shook my head. I don't know how it is, dear; but I can far more easily imagine you going out into the highways and hedges on your Master's service, than I can figure you to myself clothed in purple and fine linen, haunting kings' palaces!

"If you have not already written to Dr. Trevelyan, pray do so; I saw him on Sunday, and he is expecting to hear. Dr. Cornelius is to be the kind bearer of this budget, and him you will be able to talk to face to face. He is going on a visit to Cambridge and his nephew. Poor old gentleman, it was time he

retired from the school! He would be very glad if it were settled so that Mr. James Carden might be his successor in it. Willie Murchison, with characteristic Scotch caution, doubts whether you have sufficiently weighed your disadvantages in entering the Church without a patron, without family influence or much private fortune, and Martha has told you herself how vexed she is. But her vexation will soon pass; she wishes your good as truly as any of us. And how willing I am to see you forsake all and suffer all for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, God is my witness!"

An interval of rather more than two years had to elapse before Francis Gwynne would be of the fit age for admission to Holy Orders. Meanwhile, he had the good fortune to be elected to a fellowship in his college, and to win a prize open only to competitors who had last taken the degree of Bachelor of Arts. This prize was for the best Latin prose composition, a distinction which, more than all the other honours he had achieved, rejoiced the pride of his excellent old master, Dr. Cornelius.

His time was now chiefly employed in taking pupils and reading divinity. He had many valued friends, and a secure position from which to look out upon the world. When the summer vacation came round again, he had saved the means of a delightful

holiday, and he spent it in making a tour on foot which ended at Pengarvon. To please Mary, he kept a journal of this tour, which, as it contains certain pleasant and important incidents of his life, may be cited for the history of this period:—

"LYNDHURST, July 24.

"It will be nothing new to my indulgent Mary to hear that at the moment of leaving Cambridge I changed my mind as to the plan of my tour, and instead of setting my face towards Derbyshire, Liverpool, and Wales, I turned towards London, Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight. The reason was, that at Fen Ditton I found Carden suddenly starting for town on the summons of a relative. We took the mail together, and put up at the Chapter Coffee House, in Paternoster Row, a place much frequented by country parsons. Here we had the good luck to fall in with Dr. Trevelyan, who made us dine, and the next day invited me to drive out with him to the house of his brother-in-law, Sir George Hardwicke, at Kensington, where I had the great pleasure of meeting E.

"It is a fine house, in a large shady garden, and the resort of some of the best company in London. Sir George has the appearance of a care-worn, anxious man out of office. His wife is a distinguished leader in fashionable society, and values herself besides as a

patroness of authors, artists, and other persons of merit. She was holding her court in the garden that afternoon, with E. for her maid of honour, and my reception was gracious enough to please a lion of real celebrity. Amongst others to whom I had the honour of an introduction, there was a Mr. Scott, who has edited a volume of 'Border Minstrelsy,' and written an original poem or two, and a lively little Irish lady, the authoress of several popular romances. It was pleasant to observe the ease and simplicity that prevailed. We walked about under the trees, stared at one another, ate strawberries, gossiped, and drank tea in quite rustic style. The most noteworthy general talk I heard was of the Peace—of who had been to Paris, and who had seen Consul Bonaparte in the Tuilleries, invested with more than the magnificence of the ancient kings. The unjust aggrandisement of France is in all mouths, and no one anticipates a long cessation from war.

"So much for the great world! I did not go to Kensington again, and here I am a thousand miles from E., and alone in the heart of the New Forest. Carden remains in the Isle of Wight, where I left him a week ago, dancing attendance on a wealthy widow, his kinswoman in some distant degree, who holds out to him great expectations of fortune, for which, meanwhile, she exacts onerous service. The worthy fellow would rather be at Fen Ditton. I had four splendid

summer days with him in the island, and then crossed in a fishing-boat from Yarmouth to Lymington, which is reckoned the port of the New Forest.

"This rich woodland scenery is enchanting. You cannot imagine it, you who know only our high bleak moors. The solitude, the silence of ages dwell in the grassy glades and deep glens. In my walks I fall in with bits quite of the old world. On the road from Lymington, it was a staple cross, where four ways met; a grey, weather-worn memorial with a sun-dial, by which I rested for an hour, drawn into meditation on the swiftness of our days, our many sorrows, our need of a Helper how to live, and a Saviour, in whose arms to die!

"As I sat there, two children, a boy and a girl, drew near, carrying faggots of sticks on their backs. They were wild, unkempt young creatures, lean, sallow, and in rags. The boy propped his faggot on the steps of the cross, and gazed at me, a stranger taking my ease, while he was ready to faint under his burden. The girl, who might have been a year or two older and stronger, trudged on. The suffering of children is a terrible perplexity to me! I asked the boy what he was going to do with his faggot. He gave me to understand that it was their summer work to gather the fallen timber; and when winter was at hand, they carried it in carts to Southampton, and even as far as

Winchester, to sell for fuel. He said, in reply to a question of mine, that the old stone pillar was called 'the cross;' but when I enquired what the cross was to keep in remembrance, he could not tell. Many of the people coastwards are free-traders, and fierce and ignorant as our Cornish wreckers. When I pursued my walk, I passed by the cluster of low reed-thatched hovels where the boy lived. It was an exquisite spot, a clearing in a beech-wood—an old clearing, for the apple-trees that overtopped the chimneys were mossy with age, and showed a promise of abundance of fruit. Yet, though lovely to see, this hamlet was next door toague, to fever, and death—to a broad tract of marsh, over which a white smoke of fog was crawling as the sun declined.

"Here in Lyndhurst is the King's House, where the warden lives, and holds his courts for the trial of deer-stealers and other breakers of the forest laws. Last night, on the road from Brockenhurst, a herd of red deer started up and crossed my path, not twenty yards in front of me—very tempting for a shot, if I had been provided with a gun! Brockenhurst Church is one of the two old English churches that existed in the Forest before Norman William turned it into a hunting-ground. It stands a little way out of the village, on the top of a hill, and is a conspicuous landmark for miles around. The approach to it is by a sunken lane, between hedges tangled full of briony

bells, ferns, wild roses. The lych-gate is overshadowed by a prodigious oak, and in the churchyard is a yew so ancient that William's surveyors may have sat under it when they made their notes of the 'badger-wood' for 'Domesday Book.'

"I have been to Beaulieu Abbey; to Boldre, where Mr. Gilpin, the author of an admirable book on the Scenery of the New Forest, is residing; to Minstead and to Rufus Stone. To-morrow, if all be well, I shall travel westward, and halt for Sunday at Ellingham. In some one or other of the placid parsonages that I have seen here, I think that *study* must be of which your imagination drew me so lively and agreeable a picture! I am never long out of sight of the sea. From every open ground it is visible, with the Island in the distance, which the forest-folk call their weather-glass; for when it is clear, and the chalk patches on its downs are distinct, then, they say, they shall have rain."

"ELLINGHAM, August 3.

"Nowhere in or out of England do I believe that it would be possible to find lovelier villages than the Forest villages. You will see from the date that I am taking my time on my tour—that is because it pleases me and is doing me good. I cannot lead you with me step by step on the road, but I can tell you of its choicest scenes—of a brook all covered with water-

hilies, and the great beech-boughs stretching over for shadow, where I wandered and lost my way one sultry noon tide; of the Avon valley and the river—now narrowed between steep wooded banks, then swirling far and wide amidst rich meadows, fringed with reeds and rushes and tall yellow flags, and the wild swans floating on it—all along the river to Ibbesley, a pastoral, an idyl for beauty, for picturesqueness: to Ibbesley Bridge, cool, most welcome, with its century elms for a green tent to rest under.

"I came to Ellingham last Saturday, nearly a week ago, and am here still, in no haste to be gone. I cannot tell you what it is about Ellingham that delays me so long, but I like it. It is quiet, it is on the edge of the Forest, it is very, very old. The little church has survived many reverses: it is grievously mutilated and defaced, and yet, somehow, under its poor roof one realises the presence of God, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

"On Sunday evening I sat in a quaint, elaborately carved pew, and from a monument on the wall near, I learnt that it was the pew belonging to Moyles Court. 'And what of Moyles Court?' you may ask. Moyles Court was the home of Dame Alice Lisle, that sweet Christian lady who paid the forfeit of her life for the crime of sheltering two fugitives from Monmouth's army after the defeat at Sedgemoor. I need

not tell you the story—you know it; and how the criminal of those evil days is the saint and martyr of ours. She lies buried close by the south porch of Ellingham Church, under a mouldered brick tomb, with only this simple record: ‘Alicia Lisle dyed the second of September 1685.’ Was it for a warning of her tragedy that some churchwarden of the period caused to be painted on the wall above the rood-screen, that monition of Solomon in his Proverbs: ‘My son, fear thou the Lord and the King, and meddle not with them that are given to change?’ After sermon I made a pilgrimage in the twilight to the Court. It stands away amongst the fields and woods, and is half ruinous, given over for a habitation to the owls and the bats.

“CROXTON, *August 12.*

“When I proposed a walking tour with Carden for this vacation, I had assuredly no thought of finding myself at Croxton in the course of it. Yet here I am, and half disposed to confess a providential leading in the matter. The weather broke while I was at Ellingham, and after one whole day shut up in the sanded parlour of my inn, I wearied of solitude, and availed myself of an opportunity that presented itself of being carried to Croxton by a Sopley farmer who was driving over in his gig to attend the August Sheep Fair.

“It is a year and a half since I was here: a year

and a half since I first ventured to think of E. as the crown of my hopes, the prize of my labours. It is less than a month ago that I left her in London in the midst of worship and praise; left her, truth to tell, with a heavy heart of my own! For how could I dream of winning her, that sovereign beauty, that bright and perfect lady to whom all her world was paying court? It was my heavy heart made my feet heavy, and kept me lingering in the soft shades of Lyndhurst and Ellingham.

"Imagine then the overwhelming rush of joy with which I met her in the Close on the evening of my arrival in Croxton. I went to walk there after I had dined, and she came out to breathe the air against a long night-watch that was before her. She looked pale and tired, and she had been weeping. She told me briefly that she had come from town in haste, attended only by her maid, at the call of her good aunt, Mrs. Bell, who had been stricken with paralysis. Doctor Trevelyan was absent in Suffolk when she left Kensington—I wished for you, Mary, when she said this, for a helpful woman is a comfort in trouble, and she seems quite alone in hers.

"Night before last the swifts and swallows and martins were eddying about the spire till dusk. I feared that E. was not going to escape at all from the room of her poor invalid, but when I had given up hope she appeared. And I am sure she was glad to find me

still there. We shall be friends for life, Mary, after this, if it is not granted us to be lovers. I feel that she turns to me with confidence—and what is there that I would not do for her if I might? It was the physician who sent her out at last, with a promise to fill her place till she returned. It seems that the poor sick lady is afraid of her nurse, and even of her own servants. Some dread, conceived in the time of her health, haunts her now in her helplessness, and if E. makes a sign of leaving her with any of them alone, she becomes most painfully excited. Yet unless E. can have some relief, she will not be able to bear up long against the severe strain on body and spirit that her day-and-night watching must be. I shall be thankful to see the Canon arrive.

“14th.—The physician in attendance upon Mrs. Bell does not anticipate a fatal result to her illness. She has partially recovered her speech and the use of her right arm, and happily for E. is more reasonable in her claims upon her. Doctor Trevelyan has written, but is hindered from travelling by an attack of gout. ‘All my troubles come at once,’ E. said to me; but when I looked at her, perhaps a little wistfully on my own account, she added with her sweet, blushing smile—the first smile I had yet seen upon her face—‘I am not counting you one of them.’ This was yesterday.”

Here the present chapter of Francis Gwynne's journal to Mary ends abruptly. He did not, however, return to Pengarvon till September, but Mary was happy when he came, for he was happy too. He had brought with him assurance sufficient of Miss Trevelyan's love to fill his whole heart with joy and thankfulness. Never had Mary and he more delightful days together than now, never more delightful days did they see in this world. They took their walks together, talking continually of those things that were dearest to them both. Frank read little beyond his Bible, and visited not at all except amongst old friends, humble neighbours and the poor. This was to be his vocation, to minister and to teach, and he felt that it was his true vocation, to which he could devote his entire mind and strength. Mary rejoiced in it with him; here her sympathies were all awake. A pleasant parsonage in Cornwall or Devonshire, with a very fair wife to be his helpmeet in it, figured not seldom in her talk, and Frank did not deny himself the gratification of adding his own vivid touches to the picture. Even Martha expressed, at length, a superior sort of assent to what he had decided on.

"After all, he *may* do well," she said to Mary. "He *may* succeed, though one cannot call him world-wise. There *are* great prizes in the Church if he will

lay himself out for them; but what I fear, is that he never *will!*"

Martha was not in the secret of her brother's passion for Miss Trevelyan—only Mary was—or she would, perhaps, have entertained better hopes of him. At all events, she would have known that he was not likely to fall short of the noblest prizes for want of an aspiring mind.

Early in October, Francis Gwynne returned to Cambridge, and resumed with ardour his previous course of study and instruction. One year more, and he would have to take upon him the sacred office of a minister of God. He was convinced in his heart that religion was the one thing needful to make him happy; and yet *now*, the prospect of receiving Holy Orders began to perturb his conscience. As a means of self-examination and spiritual discipline he kept a private journal, in which he noted the daily habit of his mind, the temptations, small and great, to which he was liable, the opportunities each took of assailing him, his impatience of temper, his melancholies, discouragements, his seasons of doubt and fear, his revivals of hope and joy and holy confidence.

"He that trusteth his own heart is a fool," was the burden of his introspective studies; for he found himself no more successful than the apostle of old in subduing the law in his flesh, which prevailed con-

tinually against the law of his mind. He was for ever doing the thing he would not, and leaving undone the thing he desired to do. His natural flow of spirits was great, and he was easily carried away by his company into sarcastic or flippant talk, of which he repented afterwards with scorn of his weakness. The position he held in the University made him free of its choicest society. He had troops of friends—amongst those of his own date, some as distinguished as himself; and amongst the elder generation several whose high academical honours had borne mature fruit in the world. His disposition was social, affectionate; whatever was beautiful, delightful in nature or art, he appreciated with lively enjoyment. He valued his own attainments, and set store by the opinions of men; he loved to shine, and was exhilarated by approbation and praise. He had an exquisite relish for the various refinements of life, for literature, learned leisure, ease, comfort, good repute, and all these things he saw in the lawful possession of prosperous Churchmen, whose steps he had only to tread in to achieve the same rewards—whose steps he was expected to tread in, and even to overpass.

The best, the pleasantest of ways through the world seemed to lie straight before him; but he was restless, perplexed, as if he did not yet clearly discern his own track along it, and were waiting for further instructions. One friend assured him that he worked

overmuch for his health, and he relinquished a couple of pupils to diminish his labour in teaching. He was proposing to write for the Seatonian Prize, but Mr. Barrington, whose curate he was to be, advised him to give up that contest—advice which James Carden seconded, bidding him avail himself of the interval before ordination for devout thought as well as study; for when he came to be engaged in the duties of his curacy, he would find little time left for quiet collectedness and holy meditation. Frank felt the need of such seasons of retirement, and began to deny himself to certain persons, whose influence upon him he knew was not for good. Then he had to bear the reproach of being morbid, sedentary; he was told that he was crippling his sympathies, and neglecting the active duties of life; that a minister who was to stand forth and preach repentance and salvation to men, ought to follow the example of Christ, and make men his study in the scenes of their labour and sorrow, their trials and joys; that he ought to come out of his closet into the midst of the world, to the Lord's help against the mighty, where the battle rages continually.

Poor Frank! the battle in his own heart was often as fierce as any in that arena! At times he dreaded lest he should be worsted altogether by the flesh and the devil! He had a hard fight to keep under his body; and contemptuous thoughts, terribly injurious

to the soul, would seize upon him even as he listened to the devoutest men telling of God's dealings with themselves and others; and because the earth-stain of vanity was visible in some of them, he would turn away from their holiest things with an evil heart of unbelief. And how he suffered for it after! How pricked he was in his conscience at the pride of his judgments, at his inconsistency in requiring perfection of men like himself, who never for one single day walked without stumbling in thought, word, and deed! More light, more faith, more love; he wanted all these Divine graces. And he knew his want. He cried to Heaven for help: "It is not in man to direct his steps. I desire to do Thy will, O my God! Guide me by Thy counsel!" And help came; and he was guided by a steeper path than any he had ever thought to climb.

One evening he met at Mr. Barrington's house a venerable north country parson, who all his life had taken an active interest in missions to the heathen. The stranger spoke with enthusiasm of the modern evangelists, who forsook all to follow Christ and preach His Gospel. He recounted wonderful things that were resulting in India from the labours of a few scattered missionaries. As Francis Gwynne listened, he longed to be of their earnest company. A noble story of self-devotion always kindled a fire in his breast. He returned alone to his college rooms. Till far on in the night he thought, he prayed. Could he,

who had experienced the love of God in his own soul, stay meanly to consider how little service he could render to God again? Not so! Let him be sent where he could serve Him best, though it were to the sacrifice of country, kindred, sweet affections, praise of men—of all things earthly that he was wont to count most precious. It seemed to him that the sacrifice was no sooner offered in his heart than it was accepted in heaven! A holy joy and exultation uplifted his spirit. He saw the desert blossom as the rose before his blessed feet, bringing the glad tidings of peace; and when he remembered the cross that he must carry, he cried aloud, in the very spirit of the martyrs entering on their great tribulation, “No cross, no crown!”

This ecstatic state cannot last, but it is the measure of the height to which a fervent human soul can rise. Many a season of lowness, of fear, of sorrow followed upon it; but Francis Gwynne remembered that solemn hour, as the hour of his effectual calling and self-dedication; and never did he swerve from his obedience, though years of difficulty, opposition, temptation might well have made a less true, less faithful servant of God interpret these obstacles into a release from his covenant.

And now that he saw his path at last, the ruggedness of it, the hardships, the dangers, and the end set before him, a certain quiet prevailed over his

inner mind. "I am Thine—lead me," was his daily supplication. And it recurred to him how this had been once all foreshadowed to him—how, on that night when he had first conceived a hope of Eleanour Trevelyan's love, he had come out from the Canon's warm, lighted house into Croxton Close, black with wind and rain, the floods rising over the green lawns, and only a dim lamp under the gate for beacon, and had received a strange, mysterious impression that the solitude, tempest, and darkness were a vision typical of his life, to be spent in loneliness with his God.

VII.

A Time of Probation.

THERE was the reserve of a strong character in Francis Gwynne. He did not go about proclaiming his last intent the moment it was conceived. He set himself first to become well acquainted with the subject of missions, and with the lives of the men who had enlisted in that service. And what he read confirmed and settled him in his vocation. It was to his excellent friend James Carden that he first gave his confidence. Carden was spending a few days of December in Cambridge, and one afternoon, towards dusk, he came into Gwynne's room, and found his table littered with maps, books of Eastern travel, accounts of Vanderkemp's missions to China and Caffaria, and David Brainerd's to the North American Indians. A rapid scrutinising glance over this literature, and another glance at little Gwynne's face, assured him that here was matter for a revelation.

"Draw to the hearth; it is a frosty evening," said Frank, and wheeled his own chair round within the glow of the fire. He was looking pale and harassed, and Carden remarked deprecatingly that he was over-

doing it again. Frank sighed. "Better rub out than rust out," said he. "But I am not tired, for I am profoundly interested." And he cast a sidelong gaze at the books on his table.

"What is it all about? What does it mean?" asked his friend, wrinkling his brows in anxious perplexity.

"It means that I am going to be a missionary."

"*You*—what, *you*? My dear little Gwynne, you have neither strength of body nor strength of mind for it!" cried Carden, utterly amazed, and surprised into the plainest speaking.

Evidently Frank was mortified: he coloured, and answered curtly, "It is my vocation. I am convinced that it is what God wills me to do, and I do not fear a want of fortitude for any task He may portion out to me."

Carden was silenced for the moment. The thing had taken him quite unawares. Francis Gwynne was the very last person of his acquaintance whom he would have expected to find voluntarily setting aside the honours and enjoyments of the world for a life of obscure privation, suffering, and toil. He knew him to be of delicate frame and nervous temperament. And it seemed a pity, a folly, indeed, that a career begun with such splendid achievement should come to so lame and impotent a conclusion.

Words to this effect escaped him, and Frank fired up instantly.

"What am I, what have I done, that I should hold myself above God's service in any way that He is pleased to use me? I account missionary work right noble work!"

"Give me time to reflect. My imagination does not take in, all at once, large ideas like yours, little Gwynne," said Carden mildly; and, lying back in his chair, he lifted his eyes to the uncurtained window, before which the bare boughs of the huge sycamores in the college garden were swaying and tossing fantastically, as the wind got up. He watched them in a mood of grave abstraction for several minutes, Frank, meanwhile, gazing as mournfully into the scarlet embers of the fire.

After a considerable pause Carden began to speak again. "I know that it is not safe for a man to do anything contrary to his conscience. If you see your duty clearly in this sacrifice, of course you will make it. Have you said anything to Barrington yet?"

"No. I have not mentioned it to anyone but yourself. I must write to Mary—she will grieve, poor soul!"

"Many will grieve besides Mary. What will Doctor Cornelius say?"

"He will wish me good luck in the name of the Lord."

"That shall we all do! I hope you are prepared

to become a gazing-stock and wonder of the world to Cambridge? To hear yourself called enthusiast, fanatic, and fool? for who ever heard of a man with a career open to him at home such as you have, leaving it for the thankless labours of a missionary?"

"I am prepared for worse things than scorn," rejoined Frank. "When I consider the difficulties I shall have to encounter throughout my whole future life, I am appalled. Nevertheless, my heart is fixed to do Thy will, O God! No need to remind me of what I must give up—the delights of culture, of love, the solace of friendship! Less need still to warn me of what I must embrace—perpetual exile, discomfort, loneliness, unceasing work amongst the poor and ignorant, from which my pride revolts."

As he ceased there came over his countenance a look of extreme dejection. Carden was deeply touched. He did not know in what words to encourage his friend. He believed Frank to be sincere, but he could not yet enter cordially into this latest of his enthusiasms. "You will need time to prepare," he said at length; and perhaps there was a thought in his mind at the moment adverse to Frank's tenacity of purpose.

"I shall have time enough to prepare—time enough also to change—is that what you are saying to yourself, Carden? Nay, but I expected some sympathy, some help from *you!*!" cried Frank, with bitterness.

"My dear Gwynne, you shall have both," Carden made haste to assure him. "What you contemplate would be so impossible to myself in your place, that I have much ado to realise it. Tell me how it all came about."

Then Frank told him. He recited the substance of the old Yorkshire parson's conversation at Mr. Barrington's, and described the irresistible impulse that it communicated to his own feelings. He enumerated his investigations since, and the result of them. He alleged his position, free of absolute ties, his patrimony, sufficient for his maintenance, and his facility in the acquisition of languages, as leading and reasonable grounds for his calling to that field of Gospel labour which lies away from home amidst the heathen of lands uncivilised.

The end of his recapitulation left Carden meditative and silent. He allowed the truth of every word Gwynne had spoken, but his feeling was still one of regret that he should be so moved to speak. Not many graduates of distinction offered themselves at this period as candidates for Holy Orders. The world has larger prizes to give away than the Church. And that a young man of such complete and elegant scholarship as Francis Gwynne should expatriate himself, and go where rougher tools would do more effectual work, appeared to Carden as a waste of

power—or, if Frank would not admit the *waste*, a signal misapplication of it.

The same, or a very similar view of the case, was taken by Mr. Barrington; but he, like Carden, felt himself afraid to advise Frank against his conscience. Time would test it, he said, whether this sudden new light on his vocation was a true star in the East, or only the flicker of a delusive marshlight in his imagination. Meanwhile, he counselled him to study the details of mission life, and to compare his own physical and moral endurance with the strain they would have to bear if he entered upon it. He invited him to hear again the discourse of the Yorkshire parson, and contrary to his expectation, perhaps, each caused the other's enthusiasm to burn with a white heat. The old man's last words to the young one were, "I thank God that He has enabled me to inspire one heart for His service! Go, my son; go where He leads! Be not discouraged by difficulties either within yourself or without; but lean on Jesus, and you will have strength to persevere to the end!"

When the tidings spread abroad amongst Gwynne's less intimate friends in Cambridge that he was bent on devoting himself to missionary work in the East, some disbelieved the story, some wondered, some laughed, some ventured on serious expostulation; one told him to his face that he was fanatic enough for anything, and that he had always predicted a wild

vagary of self-devotion as the close of his career; but he admired him for it, self-devotion and heroism were becoming so rare in the world. Frank bore with their blame or praise with equal patience. The exaltation of his great resolve was still warm in his pulses. But he had a season of overwhelming distress when there came to him a letter from his sister Mary, full of grieved astonishment at what he had communicated to her for general circulation amongst his kindred and Pengaryon friends. Thus she wrote:—

“ You are not fit for a missionary, Frank. You over-rate your courage, your capacity, your vigour. And why throw away the good that you have gained? Here you might lead a pious, useful life in tranquillity and honour. Amongst the poor heathen you would be but as stubble in the fire; you would perish, and not succour them. For a missionary needs faculties far other than yours. Be advised, my dear; listen to reason; be not too self-confident—that was always your bane.”

Even Mary was against him! That was a bitter moment—bitter indeed! He hid the letter away, and went out into the wintry walks of the college garden—blue sky, sunshine, frosty serenity overhead; underfoot late fallen leaves, yellow, and brown, and sullied crimson. Here he met his jibing friend, who had foretold the heroic disaster to which he would bring

himself, and who hailed him with a characteristic greeting.

"Have you had a sight of the tempter, O Gwynne? You carry that look in your face. Don't recant; let me entreat you not to recant! If *you* recant, never any more will I believe in heroes, saints, and martyrs! And that would be a pity, for I am to be the poet of the coming age, somebody says."

"I was on my road to chapel," said Frank, quickly dispirited.

"Then come with me to King's. When the devil has got possession, and I want him cast out, I go and hear the music at King's. The anthem for to-day is a grand one!"

It was David's thanksgiving and prayer in the last chapter of the First Book of Chronicles:—

Blessed be Thou, Lord God of Israel our Father, for ever and ever.

Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty : for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all.

Both riches and honour come of Thee, and Thou reignest over all; and in Thine hand is power and might; and in Thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all.

Now therefore, our God, we Thank Thee, and praise Thy glorious Name.

The opposition Francis Gwynne encountered on all sides, when his views for himself became known,

discouraged him often, but failed to convince him of any error in judgment. His pious friends, in general, formed a very low estimate of his spiritual experiences; and one whom he greatly regarded, told him that he knew no more of the trials and temptations that beset the Christian life than he knew of the stars and planets. Well, then, he had to learn them! And it seemed to his affectionate heart that they were often very severe—as much as he could bear, even with Christ to strengthen him.

At Easter, during the recess of Parliament, he paid a visit of a few days to Hardwicke Court, in Norfolk, on the invitation of Sir George and Lady Hardwicke. And here, in the midst of the life and stir of a great party, he met Miss Trevelyan again. He had been praying against her, striving to put her out of all his thoughts, since the last crisis in his affairs; for what could a poor missionary want with a fine lady wife! and to have carried out his effort in perfect sincerity, he should not have come where she was. But he came, nevertheless; and perhaps this requires no explanation.

Eleanour was charming, gay, delightful as ever. Her aunt Bell had recovered; Doctor Trevelyan was at Croxton; and she was attached, for the season, to the court of her popular kinswoman, Lady Hardwicke.

Certain amongst Frank's friends had once con-

gratulated him on his introduction to the ex-minister, "who must come into office again when Pitt comes in." For these were days when to have a patron in power was even more essential towards gaining the early steps of promotion than personal merit. Sir George had taken a liking to the talented young man, and, if he would, his fortune at home was made. So he was told. Possibly he did not realise all that was meant to be conveyed in the intimation; for he paid it little heed, and Sir George was presently enlightened by his lady on what she was pleased to call Mr. Gwynne's crotchety enthusiasm.

"What is this that I hear of you, Mr. Gwynne—that you are training for a missionary?" the man of the world enquired with incredulous amazement. Frank coloured with something of shamefacedness as he replied that what Sir George had heard was true: it was his intention to become a missionary. Sir George turned off on his heel, as much as to say: "Then what do you come to Hardwicke for?" Thus Frank interpreted his gesture of contempt.

In that ambitious great society he found himself an object to be wondered at and curiously questioned. Successful scholarship in a very young man of an agreeable figure is interesting from many points of view. Youth and genius have the world before them in England, and may conquer all things, by judicious

help of grace and favour. Frank gave due heed to his dress and appearance; his manners were naturally courteous, and he produced a pleasing impression on several persons of influence. Lady Hardwicke was gracious, even genial: not a word spake she save in admiration of his projected sacrifice, though she privately deplored it as a cruel waste; and Eleanour was complacent too, with just a dash of melancholy. Eleanour quite believed in Frank, and let him see it; but when he talked to her of the matters nearest and dearest to his conscience, there was a sad, half-wondering pity in her eyes, much like other people's. Hardwicke was not the place where he could hope to bring her mind into true accord with his; but then, what right had he to wish so to bring it? He asked himself this question again and again; he knew it was unwise, he knew it was unsafe, but the fact remained: he *did* wish it, he wished it ardently.

Lady Hardwicke allowed her niece full liberty of discoursing with her guest. She knew beforehand that a sort of predilection subsisted between them, and her faith in talent was so genuine that she would not discourage it. She had besides entire confidence in Eleanour's discretion, and felt assured that unless Eleanour could convert Mr. Gwynne from his doctrine of self-renunciation, his hopes of her must be his first practical step in that hard and narrow way. Eleanour was of that mind too. She had experienced no move-

ment of religious enthusiasm strong enough to induce her to adopt a life of exile and hardship for Francis Gwynne's sake, but she felt that she could cheerfully cast in her lot with his if he would be content to bide the chances of fortune within the range of her family patronage. Personal insignificance was what her pride could not tolerate in the man she would accept as her lover and master, and Francis Gwynne had all the personal distinction her heart desired. She was exquisitely kind and persuasive with him; so kind—because her feeling was in her voice and gestures as she spoke—that he sometimes felt it good to fly from her sweet influences to the duller conversation of politicians.

Everybody was hot at this time on the insult publicly offered by Consul Bonaparte to the English ambassador, Lord Whitworth, for which no redress could be had. The King had sent a message to Parliament intimating the probable renewal of war. The militia was being called out, the naval force augmented, and the peril of the country loudly discussed. The camp at Boulogne held out its menace of invasion still, and Sir George Hardwicke grimly suggested to his guests that if any of them had kinsfolk or friends taking their pleasure in Paris, they should be advised to make haste home, lest Bonaparte, who was a new man, with new tactics both for peace and war, should conceive the odd notion of detaining

the guests of France against their will when hostilities were proclaimed.

After a visit of four days at Hardwicke, Frank returned to Cambridge, to his pupils, his studies in divinity, and his new studies in Eastern dialects. It was with a heavy heart that he returned. The idea of Eleanour haunted him persistently, waking and sleeping. Give her up! If it must be, it must! But the more he dwelt upon it, the more passionately he felt that he loved her.

During this summer the national troubles reached a climax. Bonaparte fulfilled Sir George Hardwicke's prediction, and when peace was broken he laid sudden violent hands on some ten thousand English of all classes and conditions who had the ill-luck to find themselves within his reach at the moment, and drafted them off to dull fortified towns, as lawful spoil of war, to wear life away in hopeless exile for many years. Then he vapoured at Boulogne, reviewing his army of invasion, and all round the English coast watchers kept their beacon fires ready to blaze the intelligence of his landing, while British cruisers swept the Channel, and three hundred thousand volunteers enrolled themselves to give him a warm welcome if he dared come.

Noisy times these were, even amongst the quietest people. To Francis Gwynne, in the monastic seclusion of his college, came from his sister Mary rumours

of war, and fear and terrible anxiety at Pengarvon, recorded in her journal.

“August 7.—It was sad news to us when the Peace ended. The port has been all astir since, for there was made here a great press of men one night in June, and the poor people are for ever in alarm. How the women and children are to live whose husbands and breadwinners were carried off, God only knows. We are in the midst of distress and terror. They had a false alarm at Berry Hill last week, and dear Martha is suffering for it. Some idle person kindled the beacon on Wilderspin Common, then a light flashed from the Church Hill at Pengarvon, and Willie Murchison, crying that something was up, ran out and fired the faggots which they had been ordered to have stacked on Berry Edge. In half an hour and less, the country all round was up and alert. Martha must needs be up and out too, and she caught a cold which has kept her in her room since. And after all, it was nothing but either mischief or accident. It was a still night, and the sea like glass in the moonshine, and far and near not a sail in sight! But even in a false alarm there is torture; for at any hour of the day or night, we know that we may be roused by a true one. Ah, my dear, what terror we live in of an earthly enemy, and how little watchful are we against our spiritual foe!

"*The 9th.*—In passing the vicarage to-day, I observed a fine commotion: carpets out of window, chairs and tables in the garden, and the maids beating and brushing with all their might. The good vicar and Miss Trevelyan are expected down in a few days, and will stay until Christmas. How I wish you could have been here at the same time! Is it quite impossible? After your ordination in October, I know that you must remain at your post—but *before?*"

The temptation to rush away to Pengarvon, put as Mary put it, was vast indeed, but Frank manfully withheld his inclination to yield. He replied to his sister, that the journey was too far, the time too short, his application to work, at present, too close:—next year, if all went well, he would come. And during the Long Vacation he kept his rooms in the deserted college, practising that denial of his affections which would have to be his rule of life. He had offered himself as a helper to the Missionary Society for Africa and the East, and was looking forward to his ordination in the autumn, with a quieter mind than had been his for a long while, though not with the joyous serenity of faith that he had once dreamed of experiencing.

The day previous to that fixed for the ordination, he drove to Ely with another young Cambridge man, who was also a candidate for Deacon's Orders. Their examination by the bishop's chaplain at the palace was not severe, and the rest of the day was spent in a

desultory manner. Francis Gwynne was mightily disconcerted by a near view of himself: for even the outward pomp and show of the morrow's ceremonial in the cathedral was able to distract his thoughts from its real significance. No holy exultation was his on that solemn occasion, but only a confused hurry of feeling in which self had the mastery. In the afternoon he set out to walk back to Cambridge, and ended the day in complete exhaustion of strength and spirit. His path of life was, however, now fixed beyond the power of change, and he gave himself to the probationary duties of it with diligence and conscientiousness. He preached for the first time at the afternoon service at Sutton, a rural parish a mile or two from Cambridge, which Mr. Barrington held in conjunction with his benefice in the town.

Poor Frank's first sermon! - He had taken pains with it, yet it disappointed himself and everybody else. The Sutton congregation was small and drowsy, and certain friends who had gone out to hear him, told him afterwards that he read prayers with too little solemnity, and preached in too low a voice, and without elocution enough. He was amazed and hurt, and began to think that his academical honours had led him to form an exaggerated estimate of his powers, and that henceforth he must be content to range with second-rate men. James Carden's warning, that he would have scant leisure for meditation when his re-

gular clerical duties began, he very soon proved the truth of. Sermon-writing was a tax on his time incessantly recurring. Visiting the poor and sick in their own homes and in the hospital, now that it was a daily labour, was not so grateful to him as use might make it. His pride and taste revolted from contact with rude, illiterate, self-sufficient persons, and a retreat to the refined silence of study acquired a new charm by contrast. All these trials and humiliations were a necessary discipline. He prayed against the tyranny of a fastidious temper, and overcame it in a measure. Casting his cares upon God, he tasted the sweetness of devotion—the inexpressible peace of a soul at rest in the Saviour. But the first step out into the world again dissipated the Divine calm. His experience was but the experience of all Christians striving to live aright.

Hitherto Francis Gwynne's material concerns had gone smoothly, but towards the close of this year an event happened which threatened to be a serious impediment to his missionary plans. This event was the total loss of his small patrimony, which involved also the loss of his sister's modest private means. Martha was well off with her prudent Scotch husband, but Mary wrote to her brother in sad distress:—she had her school, but Aunt Hannah was growing old and feeble—must he, would he, go away, and leave them in poverty and helplessness? Frank's first step was to

retrench every needless expense that he had hitherto allowed himself the indulgence of, and he wrote to cheer Mary with pledges of his succour and affection. Some of his friends who had reluctantly admitted a conviction that he would follow his calling to the last at whatever sacrifice, had begun to cast about for some means of rendering his position there more equivalent to what they considered his due. The post of a Chaplain to the East India Company combined immense opportunities of Gospel work amongst idolaters with worldly and pecuniary advantages far beyond and above any that a simple missionary could possess, and the loss of his independent means made his admirers and well-wishers more than ever urgent to obtain for him such an appointment.

He went up to London on this business early in the New Year, and his high credentials gained him an honourable reception at the India House, and also the hospitality of several good men and men of distinction, the best part of whose lives had been spent in the East. The object of his journey was not immediately advanced, but hopes were given him of a chaplaincy by-and-by, and he returned to Cambridge in a freshened frame for his pastoral work. In the spring he had a flattering glimpse of a great prospect in the reversion of the Mission Church at Calcutta; and though, until then, he had felt that to go out poor as the Lord and his Apostles was the nobler lot, he could not resist the

dreams of opulence, earthly happiness and marriage with her he loved, which revisited his imagination again as he walked many a day by the river, and watched the trees growing green towards the summer.

In the summer, however, his great prospect vanished, and his beautiful dreams with it; but still his ultimate hope and expectation remained; and when the Long Vacation began, leaving a substitute in his curacy, he set out with a good heart to visit his friends in Cornwall, according to his promise to Mary the previous year.

VIII.

In the Balance.

THERE are cold days in England in July, and it was a day that seemed to have come astray from winter which found Francis Gwynne on the Bath coach, going down to Cornwall. Eleanour's plaid was about him; rough, warm old plaid, more worn than ever, but his faithful travelling companion always. He made a halt at Exeter for a night, and again at Plymouth with friends, and reached Pengarvon on the Saturday afternoon—Mary's half-holiday from her little scholars. She was on the look-out for him, and their meeting was with mingled joy and sorrow, for this visit was regarded by both as one of leave-taking.

In the evening Mr. Sargent, Doctor Trevelyan's curate in his absence, called upon Frank, and invited him to preach the next day in the parish church; and after some talk together, they walked up the High Street to the Grammar School, to enquire for Doctor Cornelius, who still lived in one of the houses within its precincts. The Doctor was aged and half blind; but he pricked up his ears at the sound of little Gwynne's familiar voice, and gave him a greeting

that was almost tremulous in its warm emotion. Mr. Sargent left them in the purple twilight, with the window open into the cloisters, the old man and the young one together, the one almost at the end of his race, the other but starting upon his.

"A change has come over your mind since you were here last, Gwynne," said the good old master, peering at him kindly. "Then, a pleasant parsonage at home was the height of your ambition; now, nought, I hear, will content you but a tent in the wilderness, and an itinerating mission through the cities of the East. I don't blame you; once I had a touch of that roving disposition myself, and *I* might have gratified it without astonishing anybody. But *you*, our Senior Wrangler, are quite beyond the understanding of common people. No doubt they have told you so. Canon Trevelyan has told you, perhaps, that you have no business to go and teach heathen folk, which any man can do; but that you ought to stay at Cambridge, and promote elegant scholarship by example. I think myself you have chosen the better part, since your heart is in it. I grow old, and day by day less in love with the world. I am glad to see you once more, and to bless you before I am called on to leave it."

Frank was touched by the venerable Doctor's tenderness. It was a relief to speak out to him the feelings that strove in his mind. "If I could have my utmost desires, I would still say, "Thy will, O God,

not mine, be done!" Many reasons have been put before me why I should remain at home, and some of them are not without force. My sister Mary fears for my health, that it will soon unfit me for foreign service; but I seek no excuse, and the inner witness of my conscience tells me that I need not look far forward; one step at a time is enough. It is not that I am insensible to what I must leave; I value the world and the things of the world too much! In going out to India, I give up home and country. I believe it is my duty to go alone, unfettered by ties of affection; and God knows how precious they are to me! He knows, also, for He sees the conflict, how I am resolved to be His first, last, and only, through whatever anguish of self-denial and separation!"

"That sacrifice may not be required of you. I trust that it may *not*," replied the Doctor. "I know *her*, and you are worthy of each other. A good wife is a good thing, and I think that men of experience will tell you a chaplain in India ought to be married. A poor missionary may be better free—it depends on his post."

Frank's heart bounded. How he loved the excellent old master for opening to him that window of hope! And what a revelation the sudden tumult in his breast was of that other love which he was trying to over-rule, as being at enmity with his devotedness to God.

Doctor Cornelius continued: "Your salary will be ample, and, holding a sacred office, which will bring you into company with Europeans of the laxest sort, you will need a wife for a helpmeet. The climate is enervating, the society full of danger and temptation—"

Frank's thoughts had flown. He heard here a word and there a word of counsel, of warning, of encouragement; but nothing so coherent as the visions of his fancy. And these visions so unsettled him that before he retired to rest, he walked a couple of hours in the garden, thinking only of Eleanour; and when he slept at last, he dreamed of her, heard her voice calling to him blithely and sweetly.

He woke up late to the sound of the Sunday morning bells, and got a gentle rebuke from Mary for the vigil that had occasioned his tardiness. But no matter; his sermon was ready, and his talk with Doctor Cornelius had liberated his spirit from an oppressive weight. He preached the more earnestly for that freedom. The gloomy old church on the hill was thronged to the doors with Pengarvon people, who had known him and his family for generations. A great report had come before him to the town, that he had been converted, and was going to give up the fruits of hard-won honours and all that makes life delicious, to carry the good news of salvation to the heathen. And these simple Methodist folk looked at him with far other eyes than his critical Cambridge

friends. Here he was an hero, an apostle. Some who remembered his mother, his mother's father, that poor missionary of Wesley's, who had died amongst them, said how like his countenance was to theirs; how beautiful, how divinely exalted and inspired as he lifted up his voice in witness of the Lord, that had redeemed Israel.

His sister Mary was present, with Aunt Hannah, in her accustomed place; but at a distance, by one of the doors, because they had come in late, was his sister Martha; with her husband, two of her children, and a frail aged woman, one of those good Christians who had nourished and brought up his mother. It was a pathetic little group. In the midst of his sermon, Frank became aware of Martha, in the handsome attire that used to become her so well; but now her poor face, hollow-eyed, hollow-cheeked, hectic, looked like a shadow of death crowned with mock roses. The younger child was in her lap, his warm little drowsy face turned confidingly to her shoulder; for Martha was a most fond mother. The sight of his sister thus, his recollection of her character, her disposition to be troubled about many things, and to neglect the one thing needful, touched his lips with sacred fire. He spoke as if he were delivering his message for the last time, and unconsciously as she listened, tears gathered in Martha's eyes, and her heart was shaken, as never before, with awful thoughts of

life and death, of salvation and eternity. Whether she would or no, time and this world were lapsing away from her; house, husband, and children, all must she leave soon. "Come unto Jesus, ye that labour and are heavy laden, and He will give you rest," quoth the preacher; and suddenly she seemed to hear the tramp of footsteps behind her, the footsteps of death drawing nearer and nearer, and no refuge but this—but *this!*

The old Methodist friend of her mother, whom she counted a very saint, had pleaded with her often and long, but in vain; and here was Frank, poor Frank, whose unworldliness she had despised, overcoming her quite with his words of power. She waited for him when they went out of church, and took his arm down the hill. But she did not speak of herself; she only said, with an attempt at her light tone, "At any rate, Frank, you can preach!" He saw that she was much excited, and answered her with nothing but a kind look. Then she knew that he had seen her tears in church, and, in spite of her pride, they gathered again.

All the family, brothers and sisters, old people and children, spent that afternoon at the old house together; and the next morning Frank moved to Berry Hill, for more quiet than he could have with Mary's little scholars coming twice daily to and fro, and filling the parlour. Berry Hill was a solitary house, but ex-

quisitely lovely for situation, about a mile and a half from Pengarvon, and a mile from the mines where Mr. Murchison had succeeded to the post formerly held by his father-in-law. Frank had never stayed there before, and the ways of the household were strange to him, and very distressing. Whatever money and management could provide of material comfort, of luxury, according to the ideas of the time and place, was to be had there; but the moral atmosphere was dry and harsh, without the serenity of religion or the sunshine of culture. For anything that appeared in the daily domestic routine, the whole family might have been living without God in the world. Nobody had a moment to spare; the day began and ended in work, work, nothing but work. The master of the house was up and away to his business early, the mistress was after her maids, the children were at school or at play. Frank wondered how Martha had let the practice of piety drift so completely out of her habits.

"Willie does not like a fuss about religion," she said in excuse, when he asked how it had come about. "He has his own notions; his bringing up was so strict that he hates formality, and vows his boys shall never suffer as he did from catechism, texts, and tawse. But he is very good in his way, and has been a tender husband to me, Frank. It is a dreadful thing to look forward to, my being taken from him while the children are so young. You don't know our trouble since

we have been assured that my life is past praying for. I am just fading away as my mother did... Mary and you will do the same... This is a world of vain hope and sorrow!"

"The more need, then, dear Mattie, that we should seek a better country; even a heavenly," replied her brother; and on that text he spoke comfort to her and to himself at the same time.

In the evening he walked on the sea-shore for hours alone, entreating God for his sister, and not entreating without hope, though no actual reward was given to his sight. Martha was growing day by day weaker, more fevered, yet she continued to go about her household, and to vex and disquiet herself if the least thing turned amiss. If Frank begged her to rest quiet awhile in the parlour with him, and talk, she would sit down with an air of relief; but soon her eyes became anxious and wandering. She heard one of the children in the garden cry, and was sure he was hurt; or she smelt a smell of something burning in the kitchen, and the cook must be letting the preserves boil over, or the roasting-jack stand still, and she must see to it. As long as she lived she would be cumbered with cares; it was her nature, she could not help it.

The habitual disregard of religious observances at Berry Hill was a cruel discomfort to Frank, and he could not enforce a change; but for his sister's sake,

and that she might aid her; he remained there. There was no choice of books in the house to help him through the long days. He would take his Bible and go up to the Edge, a steep ridgy hill at the back of the house, commanding a glorious prospect of cliff and sea, and purple moor, and there he would sit and read or meditate, and review his life; and sometimes, to refine away the dross of earthly cares, would set his higher thoughts to words of music. And these were amongst his happiest hours in Cornwall.

Round about Pengarvon he had a considerable circle of acquaintances, several of whom claimed, at this time, the privileges of friends and countrymen, and desired to show him hospitality, but for general society he cared little. His mind was too fast set on great matters to be pleasantly diverted by insipid, idle talk. He commonly walked into Pengarvon once a day, and saw Mary and Aunt Hannah, and often Doctor Cornelius; he visited the poor fisher-folk about the haven, and wherever he went he was much made of. There were inducements enough to keep him at home, if he would have yielded to them. Mary was very sore still about his going to India; but he presently discerned that there was one amongst their neighbours who felt a warmer interest in her than his own, and that she would not long stand in need of his brotherly protection. Mr. Sargent confided to Frank that he was desirous of making Mary his wife, and Frank's consent

was given cordially. Mr. Sargent was an excellent person, holding a small benefice at Clifden, two miles from Pengarvon, and serving Doctor Trevelyan as occasional curate. He had a modest little parsonage of his own to install a wife in when she was won; and the assurance that his gentle sister would be well provided for was an unexpected relief to Frank's mind. It was a promise that she would marry before he left England, and with this promise in hand, he was able to anticipate his departure with one anxiety the less.

Francis Gwynne had been a fortnight at Berry Hill when Mary's little scholars took their customary harvest holiday, and as the old house was then quiet enough, he moved back into the town, to give Mary her due share of his company. The next day, Saturday, Doctor Trevelyan and his niece arrived at the vicarage from Bath, and Mr. Sargent retired to his own parsonage at Clifden. Frank had been impatiently waiting for this event; but he found it not an unmixed good when it happened. He was to preach in the parish church on Sunday evening, and the certainty that Eleanour would be there proved a serious disturbance to his thoughts beforehand. He did not see her in the morning, for he took the duty at Wilderspin Church, which was near the mines, and chiefly frequented by the miners and their families; nor did he see her to speak to until after sermon in the evening, though he was sensitively aware of her presence

with her uncle in the vicarage pew, from the moment of her entrance.

To Eleanour the manner of this meeting was a pure delight. Her heart was at ease, and full of a serene joy at the mere view of Francis Gwynne. Nor was his trouble manifest, unless in a slightly nervous exaltation and tremor of his voice at intervals. The church was crowded to overflowing, and the jolly vicar did not wonder at the congregation when he heard how the young preacher could speak home to the conscience and spiritual cravings of men and women. What a pity, he thought, what a pity that, with such noble gifts, Gwynne should be so Quixotic! But he would have a good talk with him, and try to make him change his mind.

The Doctor's good talk had, however, to stand over for the present; for after service, when Frank called at the vicarage, Eleanour was on the look-out in the garden, and they seemed to assume that *their* talk was of the first importance. They met with the cordiality of friends who are sure of one another, and asked and answered a dozen ordinary questions in as many minutes. They strolled down the broad walk side by side, and the Doctor was left to his own reflections. This show of intimacy did not vex or surprise him. It had been more than once or twice a matter of discussion in the family circle, at Hardwicke and at Croxton both. One thing had been distinctly recognised and freely acknow-

ledged by Eleanour's natural guardians: that she was a young lady of spirit, who knew her own mind, and would have her own way. For uncles and aunts to rule or thwart her would be impossible; for she was now of age, and in possession of her own fortune—a very moderate fortune, it is true, but enough for independence. Instead, therefore, of trying either to drive or lead her, she was judiciously given her head. If Francis Gwynne would consent to remain in England, a match with him need not be unworthy of her.

"There is always hope in the future of a young man who achieves high academical honours," Lady Hardwicke had said; and Sir George had added that, with prudence, Gwynne might rise to whatever rank he pleased—the Church was the most open of all professions to distinguish merit. "But I will never agree to her going out with him to India," announced the Canon. "If she go, it must be without my consent." "And without mine also," Aunt Bell had subjoined.

All these sentiments and intentions of her own people Eleanour was perfectly aware of when she and Frank walked that Sunday evening in the bowery vicarage garden. She was aware besides that Lady Hardwicke had expressed a hope that she might prevail with Frank to give up his folly of self-renunciation, and stop at home. But if she had ever indulged a belief in her own power for this end, she was

quickly undeceived. Frank began almost at once to speak of his destination, and of this visit to Cornwall as his last.

"Then your mind is firmly fixed—is past the skill of any of your friends to move it?" said Eleanour, in a tone of deprecating enquiry.

He avowed that it was; answering her not with enthusiasm, and not even with cheerfulness. "If I know myself," he said, "nothing that the world has to give would compensate me for denying my vocation. Times of regret, depression, of loneliness and acute suffering await me, perhaps, but I can abide them gladly for His sake who has called me."

And then he drew her from personal talk to converse on spiritual subjects, on the life of Our Lord, and the New Testament history of it; and her reverent, simple manner was peculiarly satisfying to his taste.

Eleanour was kind, was charitable, was pious in a light-hearted way. She did not study her steps as Frank did, but she walked sincerely and naturally in the good paths she had been taught. He felt her sterling excellence, and loved her sweet courage that never feared to do or say wrong. He felt also an undeveloped strength of character in her to which she was herself not awakened. If it were better for him to have a companion than to go forth on his wanderings alone, what a helpful, what a dear companion to

him she might be! With her beside him, there in the twilight, and only God to hear, he told her so.

"Ah, Frank," she said, "but I am not good enough! I am not self-denying; and life is terrible in India!"

He did not venture to say another word. What he found it a hard struggle to give up for love of Christ, he did not dare imagine she would be persuaded to give up for only love of him!

They separated a few minutes after, and Frank passed a miserably disturbed night.

Not for a moment could he keep her out of his mind. He prayed against the tyranny of his passion, he endeavoured to analyse it, and to convince himself how slight a thing it was, weighed against duty, salvation, death, and eternity. He betook himself to his Bible for counsel, and one while he seemed about to triumph; but, even as he read, his thoughts strayed back to his idol, and he knew that the wise king's dictum, when he declared that "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it," was as true for him as ever it had been for mortal man before him.

And Eleanour? Eleanour was much less distressed. She knew herself beloved, and that is always something to a woman. Nothing else was quite real to her yet. She was sanguine by temperament, and not prone to exaggerate difficulties. She could not give

her mind to think otherwise than that difficulties would vanish, and she would be happy.

The Doctor asked her the next morning what Frank had said to her—was he still of a mind to go to India? Yes, she replied; his heart was set upon it. But he could not go until he had received Priest's Orders, and he must wait for Priest's Orders till he had completed his twenty-fourth year, which would befall next January.

"Do you consider it wise to cultivate his friendship under these circumstances, Nelly?" asked her uncle suggestively.

"I should not like to forego it," was her candid reply.

"If he were willing to remain in England, none of us would disapprove. But, as it is, are you not laying up sorrow for yourself and mortification for him?"

"I do not think so. The present time is good. Sorrow will come when it is due. There would be sorrow and mortification now if I refused his friendship. Why should we not be friends?"

"Circumstances may change, or he may be induced to take a more practical view of them."

"I should not admire him the more if he were untrue to himself for my sake."

"Then what do you mean, Nelly? You will not surely dream of India for yourself?"

"I don't know what I mean beyond making the best of to-day. No, I should be afraid of India."

"Then you are encouraging delusive hopes—and is that quite fair?"

"He knows that I could not go to India. I have told him so."

"He has asked you, then? He does not want for assurance! Are you trusting to turn his purpose? There are all manner of possibilities in the chapter of accidents, that's true. I intend to have a serious talk with him myself, for I consider that it will be a foolish throwing away of himself to go to India, whether as chaplain or missionary. Inferior men are good enough for either service, and we want our scholars at home."

These arguments, and others like them, Francis Gwynne had heard and answered until he was sick of hearing and answering. That he might have Eleanour by forsaking his call to the East, he regarded in the light of a temptation, and in no other light. He certainly would not forsake it—far rather would he give up his fond hopes of her. Whether a middle way of reconciling his heart's desires might yet be found, he must leave to God. This Doctor Trevelyan fully understood when he had talked but a few minutes to the young man, and any means of persuasion that he might have thought of applying to his case he let alone. It is very difficult to reason

against honest convictions—not many men have the courage to do it. The jolly vicar had not, and admitted to himself that he was conquered. He said to his niece afterwards, that it was of no use; her lover was possessed by the stern spirit of self-renunciation, and she would have to let him go, unless she herself was disposed to give up the world for love, and count it well lost!

Eleanour was not disposed to do anything in haste. Her present-time philosophy was excellent in practice. She continued to see Francis Gwynne, and to be quite happy in his society. There was a harmony between their two natures which made the hours easy and pleasant that they spent together. These hours were spent mostly out of doors—in the vicarage garden, along the sea-shore, or over Wilderspin Common. It was exquisite harvest weather, and to skirt the corn-fields by the path along the cliffs, to dip into the furzy hollows, to rest in the shade of the summer woods, was infinitely delightful. Sometimes they sat down in the cottages of the poor, and Frank discovered that Eleanour had a name there, that she was beloved. All he learnt of her strengthened the mastery she exercised over his best and tenderest feelings. They walked together as friends whom no separation can ever alienate. Frank did not revert to the possibility of her going with him to India, nor did she remind him of it. It seemed as if they were tacitly agreed

not to let the future event of his going interfere with the joy and peace of their days together now.

Their friends did not meddle with them again, either by way of warning or of advice. Frank had a sharp attack of illness occasioned by a chill, and Mary betrayed in her anxious face how much she feared for him in the future; but she held her peace. He knew her thoughts; and there was poor Martha wasting away before their eyes. His recovery was, however, rapid, and a few days after he was out of doors again, he was dining at the vicarage. Doctor Trevelyan was rather merry at his expense, and made several half jesting remarks prophetic against his health if he should go abroad, till Colonel Harley, a retired Indian officer, settled at Pengarvon, who was also one of the vicar's guests that day, dropped a few consolatory words to the effect that the climate of India would probably conduce to the lengthening of Mr. Gwynne's life rather than the reverse. This was the first cheering opinion of the sort Frank had heard, and it rejoiced him exceedingly. Colonel Harley then went on to give him, as the fruit of his own observation, a graphic account of what he would have to do and suffer out there as a Company's chaplain, and expressed a hope that he meant to provide himself with a wife before he started. This was all in Eleanour's hearing, but she made no sign of being moved by it.

Another of the guests was a clergyman of the

neighbourhood who had spent fourteen years as a missionary in the West Indies, and had lately returned quite worn out and broken in constitution. He also furnished Frank with the benefit of his experiences, and did not discourage him, though the tone in which he spoke of his work and his success was anything but glowing.

"The material miseries of the life are very great—no description can enable you to realise how great," he said. "Then there is the trial of solitude: and we have to make up our minds to go on working, though it seem to as little purpose as pouring water on the sea-shore. Those who preach the gospel to the heathen obey a literal command of God, and their obedience has to be enough for them often; for it is not given to every missionary to see results—any more than it is given to the man who sows a wilderness with acorns to see it grown up into a magnificent forest."

As Mr. Reed enunciated these sentiments with the simple confidence of a man who thoroughly knows what he is talking about, Frank encountered Eleanour's eyes resting on him with a wistful compassion. She blushed and sighed softly as she turned away her face. She was thinking: no, she never could endure to share that life, even with him! Frank understood what was passing in her mind, and did not blame her. He knew that such sacrifices, to be perfect, must be

spontaneous; the result of inspiration, not of training and teaching merely.

He left the dining-parlour before the other gentlemen rose from their wine, and went into the garden to join Eleanour. Two ladies were there besides, the wives of Colonel Harley and Mr. Reed, who took their way and matronly conversation apart in the vine-arbour, purposely leaving the young people to themselves. A general idea existed amongst Miss Trevelyan's friends that she had a predilection in favour of Mr. Gwynne, but nobody quite believed that she would have the generous courage to give up her easy, graceful part in the world at home, to cast in her lot with his elsewhere.

"She may wish it, or fancy she wishes it, but she will not do it," said Mrs. Harley. "In the first place, her own people would be against it; in the next, she has too many daintinesses and caprices. It is a rough life at the best in India."

"You ought to know. I know it was rough, and *very* rough, in the islands, but I would not have lost my John for the sake of being ever so comfortable with papa and mamma in Somersetshire," said Mrs. Reed.

"Of course not; one understands that. But Miss Trevelyan will not risk India. She is very strong, she has never had a day's illness since she was born, and her health being good, other objections might vanish

if she set herself to overcome them. But she will not do that. She will make them her excuse."

"Yet she loves him. Perhaps she will join him when he is settled. It is natural she should be afraid at first. I was—and *very* miserable."

Frank and Eleanour were pacing up and down the broad middle walk, now hidden by the thick bushes, then coming into full view of the ladies in the vine-arbour. But they were too deeply absorbed in each other to heed much who watched them. The pomegranates were in flower, the oleanders and magnolias, the myrtles and roses, shedding a tropical glow of colour and richness of fragrance over the garden. Eleanour had a cluster of the pomegranate blossoms in her hair, and another in the bosom of her white dress. She was a lovely picture in the midst of the green, and looked like anything rather than a woman made for hardship and self-sacrifice. She could admire heroism, but could not rise herself to heroic stature—not by a voluntary effort, that is.

Frank was keeping a strong hand upon his tender impulses, and would say no sentence to persuade her against her nature and judgment. On the contrary, he was afraid whether he had not gone too far already—he coveted her kindness, but not, *not* if she might by that means turn him from his duty.

What Eleanour was musing of, she would not,

perhaps, have liked to confess; but the burden of it most likely was: "If he would *only* stay in England!" She did not, however, put any such condition into words, and if he discerned the thought working in her mind, it was through some glance or gesture which he might, after all, have misinterpreted. For the first time since he had known her, Francis Gwynne, with a salutary distrust of his own firmness, was thankful to escape from the sweet witchery of her presence, and to re-collect himself in solitude.

And Eleanour, for the first time, felt herself unhappy and sad when he was gone.

IX.

Last Days at Pengarvon.

ONE morning Francis Gwynne walked out from Pengarvon alone to Berry Hill. It was delicious going over the heath, all robed in purple and gossamer, with the breeze from the sea rippling the long grasses and waving the broad banners of fern. On reaching the house he found it deserted except by the servants, who told him that the mistress had taken the children and gone up to Berry Edge to spend the day, which was a birthday in the family, that of the eldest boy. Frank followed to the Edge, and found his sister there with old Hester Ryle, the last survivor of those excellent women who had taken care of their mother in her orphanhood. The nurse had established herself at some distance, in sight but out of ear-shot, and the little children were playing about her safely amongst the knolls and hollows of the hill. They espied Uncle Frank first, and ran all with cheery shrill cries to meet and welcome him—a sign that he was good to them, which, indeed, he was, and most tolerant of their clamour, noisy bairns that they were. It was some time before they would let him go again,

but at length he bethought him of a treasure in his pocket, and a handful of sugar plums flung abroad over a space of level sward diverted their affection, and enabled him to get free from their small, tenacious clutches.

Martha had watched him with a melancholy smile, and when he came up to her she said: "How kind it is of you, Frank, dear! Here we are making holiday for your godson's birthday—the last that I shall ever see!"

"They are merriest out in the sunshine," said Frank, and turned to look at the children himself.

After a minute or two he sat down upon the ground near his sister and her aged friend. Martha, still ruled by her industrious instincts, had brought out her basket of needlework, and was busy with new shirts that she was making for her boys. "They are too large for them now, but if they live, they will grow up to them, poor darlings. And who knows who will make their next?" she said drearily. "I will not mark them, Hester; for if anything should happen to Franky or Bob before they come into wear, then little Jack might take to them. You'll remember."

Neither Hester nor Frank spoke. All Martha's talk now was of the time when she should be no longer there to be a mother to her children. That was the aspect death put on for her now—separation

from her dear ones, their helplessness without her, the neglect they would be exposed to, the unkindness, perhaps, and the unmerited suffering. And it was not wholly comforting to tell her that God would provide, that their Aunt Mary would be at hand to give them her oversight; for she manifested a jealousy of letting them pass into any charge but her own. She liked better to be assured how much they would miss her, how her loss could never be made up to them—which, in truth, it never could!

"I shall not look to see you any more, Frank, when you leave us this time," she began to say by-and-by.

"It is too far a journey to make again, Mattie—I do not expect ever to return from India myself," Frank replied.

"You speak as if your going was already fixed. What will Miss Trevelyan do? She was here one day last week:—one cannot but admire her for a gay and gracious lady, but it is a pity you have set your love so high."

"Perhaps. But love is not always at a man's bidding."

"I am afraid she will be no partner for you, Frank. To speak fine words and even to imagine fine things is not evidence of the power or will to do them. Miss

Trevelyan is beautiful to look at and listen to, but hers is not a great soul."

"You don't know her, Mattie; her enthusiasm is pure as light!"

"She may reach after noble deeds, and so she does, but she will not attain to them any more than I, with my hard nature, shall attain to the devout spiritual mind of our Mary. It is not in her to love any creature absolutely better than herself, and my faith is not strong enough to rejoice in God's mercies when He chastens me."

Hester Ryle stretched out her hand, lean and tremulous with age, and laid it on Martha's arm: "But you will, dear, you will," she said. "Step by step, as a child, tenderly the Lord is leading you now."

"I am not fearful. At all events, I have done my duty as a wife to Willie, and as a mother to the boys. And I cannot charge my conscience that I was ever unkind to them at home, or to any neighbour we have. I have gone to church regular, and to sacrament at Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide; and if Willie would have let me, I'd have brought up the children from the beginning with their Catechism and Bible-reading, and family prayers twice a day, but he would not. If you examine the two biggest, brother Frank, you'll find they know most of the nice Scripture stories and many beautiful verses; and they know it

is wicked to tell a lie and to be cruel to one another as well as we do. God knows I have done my best; and if that is not a comfort to rest on in dying, tell me what is!"

"It is true comfort, my dear, as far as it goes, but the robe of your own righteousness is not fit to appear in before a perfect Judge," said Hester mildly. "Heaven would be a strange country to you if you could enter it as you are. This world and its works and cares are of that spirit you speak in. But heaven is love and peace, the presence of the Lord of glory, of the holy angels, of the redeemed and blessed for evermore!"

"Aunt Hester, you have never been there—what do you know? What is there certain? Look around—look at that lovely sky, that azure sea, look at the violet haze upon the hills—listen to the bairns' dear voices! *This* is heaven enough for me! heaven can give me nothing more than I desire. Oh, I am sad, sad, sad to leave this pleasant earth! and yet I must go—I must go!"

The pathetic fall in his sister's voice thrilled Frank through. How often in his secret soul had he been tried by the same unbelief!—how often in the emptiness of his days had he asked who would show him any good! What struggles had he just now to delight in God! how strongly was he tempted to declare that

nothing in heaven or earth could compensate him for the joys he felt called on to resign!

Silence was the best present answer to Martha's revolt. They all sat quiet a little while, till Frank observing that Hester Ryle had a book in her lap, enquired of her what it was.

"Thomas à Kempis—The Imitation of Christ," said she, and handed it to him: a very ancient mildewed volume, bound in black leather, stained with sea-water, and worn with long service. "I will give it to you for a keepsake, Francis: your mother dearly loved that book, and there will be excellent words in it for you who are trying to walk in the highway of the Holy Cross. Take it, dear, and may you find a blessing in it."

"It is too hard doctrine for me; I cannot bear it," said Martha, and smiled with a most wistful melancholy.

Frank turned over the leaves, and read here and there a sentence, a golden sentence:—

"Many words do not satisfy the soul; but a good life comforteth the mind, and a pure conscience giveth great assurance in the sight of God.

"All perfection in this life hath some imperfection mixed with it; and no knowledge of ours is without some darkness.

"When thou hast Christ, thou art rich and hast enough. He will be thy faithful and provident helper

in all things, so as thou shalt not need to trust in man. For men soon change, and quickly fail; but Christ remaineth for ever, and standeth by us firmly unto the end.

"Why dost thou gaze about, since this is not the place for thy rest? In heaven ought to be thy home. All earthly things pass away, and thou together with them. If thou canst not contemplate high and heavenly things, rest thyself in the passion of Christ.

"Love Him, and keep Him for thy friend, who, when all go away, will not forsake thee nor suffer thee to perish. Sometime or other thou must be separated from all, whether thou will or no. Keep close to Jesus both in life and in death, and commit thyself to His trust, who, when all fail, can alone help thee.

"There is no salvation of the soul, or hope of everlasting life, but in the Cross.

"It is no small matter either to lose or to gain the kingdom of God. Lift up thy face, therefore, unto heaven.

"The days of this life are few and evil, full of sorrow and straitnesses. Succour me, O thou everlasting Truth!"

Martha's fingers were moving swiftly with her needle, but tears were dropping from her eyes as fast. Her brother's voice seemed to sink down into her heart. Old Hester Ryle sat with clasped hands out-

stretched and resting on her knees, her dim sight dwelling on the horizon, her pure and holy face expressive of a perfect peace. She was like the angel of Divine patience waiting to bring home a wandering soul.

After a short pause of silence, Frank rose and strolled away from them down the hill, and by a rugged, woody cleft in the rock to the sea-shore. He felt a need of being alone awhile.

To make the children's holiday perfect, dinner had to be eaten on the Edge, and towards five o'clock a gipsy tea was to be ready, at which their father and Aunt Mary had promised to appear. They kept their word duly, and with Mary came another guest, who, though more of a stranger, was heartily welcome—Mr. Sargent.

"If we had Aunt Hannah, we should be all here," said Martha, to whom the hospitable entertainment of her friends had been ever a delight. She regretted for several minutes that she had not bethought her early enough of sending her own light wicker donkey-chaise down into the town to bring Aunt Hannah up the hill. "She was afraid of the toilsome climb, the dust and the heat in walking—do you think she would have come if I had sent for her straight, Mary?" she enquired almost fretfully. Mary was of opinion that Aunt Hannah would not have availed herself of the donkey-chaise, whatever her wish to be there, see-

ing she was bound to her couch that day by an attack of acute rheumatism; Martha, partially relieved in her mind by this assurance, bade her sister remember to carry a cake or two home from the feast, for a treat to the poor house-tied sufferer.

Mr. Murchison was the last to arrive. "Are you wise to be here, Martha?" he said, going straight to his wife.

"It is happy to see the bairns enjoy their pleasure: it will do me neither good nor harm," she replied, smiling ruefully up in his face. It was true enough, but there was a sort of recklessness in her being out all day that grieved him.

Mary presided over the tea-making, and Frank and Mr. Sargent were head-waiters. Any stranger passing by that way would have taken them for a joyous, merry family, and so, in a manner, they were. The children, laughter-loving little mortals, without a care, secure of indulgence for their innocent pranks, took their refreshment afoot, to and fro from one elder of the company to another: snatching away now Uncle Frank's cap, then Aunt Mary's scarf, now poor mother's white-work, which she had laid aside to take her tea.

"We shall never gather all together here any more, Willie," said his wife, talking to him in a low voice apart. "I am glad it has happened so that Frank is with us for the last time. Next year at this date he

will be in India, or on his way there—and I shall be—where?"

"Still here, Martha, let us hope," replied her husband, as cheerfully as he was able. "But come, now, I shall take youindoors—you have had enough of it."

When Martha rose to go home, Hester Ryle followed. Next went the children and the nurse; and by-and-by, Frank, Mary, and Mr. Sargent were left to themselves. They were in no haste to move. The sun was not yet far declined towards the west, and the very sweetest evening-time was still to come. Oh, how often in after years, divided by half a world, Francis and Mary Gwynne remembered that delicious hour, and the going down of the day in golden splendour, with thoughts too deep for tears! It was like a sacrament of parting. They did not utter it, but both felt inwardly convinced that when they should have exchanged their next good-byes there would be no more meeting again for them on this side heaven's gates. The clouds about the sunset flushed and reddened, then paled, then purpled into blue-black mountains, encircling as it were a wondrous aerial lake, pale green and primrose, and faint moonlight grey, with narrow inlets and reaches, and broad bays, and the weird forms of trees upon the promontories of the strange cloudlands.

"What an illusion in the sky!" Mr. Sargent said.

"A traveller who did not know the country might suppose that there was water far beyond the moor."

The spell of meditation was broken, and they all rose up to go.

As far as their road ran in the same direction, they walked in company, Mary conversing softly with her affianced husband, Frank quite silent, meditating on his near departure, and all that hung thereby.

He acknowledged to himself that he felt more and more unwilling to leave Eleanour as the time to be with her escaped him; and yet he was assured that he would have no alternative but to leave her, or to stay at home himself. Others saw it even more clearly; and some did not scruple to try and shake his resolution by drawing him vivid pictures of all that he was bent on foregoing: pictures of the promotion that must accrue to him in the Church by-and-by, of the social converse of learned and good men, of the domestic happiness which was only too lively a desire of his own heart. Dr. Cornelius was the only friend he had, perhaps, who refrained from tempting him to abandon his duty. The excellent old man, aware of the disaster that had befallen Frank and his sisters in the loss of the little money left them by their father, had generously offered to his favourite pupil the use of his purse, bidding him ask and take with the freedom of a son. This was a boon to the young man which he could not afford to refuse, and

he accepted it in the spirit in which it was given. It would facilitate his preparations for going abroad: indeed, without it, he would have been hindered in many mortifying ways which it had been a real pain to him to anticipate. For he had the pride of independence, which is ashamed to beg or borrow from reluctant, unsympathising helpers, and yet he must have stooped to do it, had not Dr. Cornelius come forward with his liberal spontaneous aid.

He was revolving these circumstances in his mind when a turn of the road brought them to a stile and a footpath across the fields leading towards Clifden. Here Mr. Sargent bade Mary and her brother good-night, and the two continued along the highway, with the town and haven in full view before them, the church on the beacon hill, and the picturesque and ancient vicarage with its quaint dormer windows glittering in the last reflections of the sunset. It was a beautiful and touching scene to them both. It was not likely that they would ever again come down the familiar winding road they knew so well, hand in hand, as they were doing now.

Mary could not repress her regrets. "Ah, Frank, why *will* you go?" said she, appealing to him with tender urgency. "When I am in our bright little cottage at Clifden, am I never to have the joy of welcoming you? I have never had any plot or plan in my life but you figured in it. See the old vicarage!

how peaceful, how homelike it is! in just such a home as that was to have been the retired, pleasant study we used to talk about. Oh, think of it, dear, think of it again!"

"It is never for an hour absent from my mind, Mary. All my prayers to love the Creator better than the creature return into my own bosom. Every thought of Eleanour is accompanied by a sort of vague pain which I know will increase when she is beyond my reach. I struggle faintly to forget her and delight in the vocation to which God has called me, but my struggles are ineffectual. My mind is so taken up with her that I can think of nothing else. I am weary of the world. I almost long for death, that I may be free from the troubles of this life!"

"If it must be, dear, we ought to help you with our prayers instead of hindering you with our persuasions. I will strive with my selfish wishes. I will entreat God for you, that you may be helped and strengthened to do the thing that is right, whatever it be," said Mary, with tearful fervour. And they finished their walk in silence.

The next morning Francis Gwynne betook himself, for the sake of solitude, to Wilderspin Common. Oh; the beauty of it, the dewy exhilarating freshness of it in the early day! This common had been a famous place for kite-flying in his boyhood; but higher than any kite rose the castles-in-the-air that he had come

out alone to build. He was under the influence of one of those sudden resuscitations of hope for which no mind is altogether accountable. He gave free reins to his imagination, creating for himself in the future a life entirely conformable to his wishes. He prevailed with Eleanour to see the world through his eyes, and to esteem it of little worth save as the place where man has to assist in working out the will of a Divine Providence as he passes forward to a higher state of existence. This higher state he realised, he aspired to, he in a measure enjoyed. Heaven must begin for us here if we are to possess it hereafter. It was by such interludes in his dejection as this that Francis Gwynne was enabled to go on living and persisting in his great purpose. He was happy that day, and so he wrote himself down in his journal—too often now a record of ordeals that tried him almost over much, ordeals that he would have failed under but for a strength not his own, communicated to him in more fulness than he recognised, in fulness sufficient for his necessity.

But on the morrow, earth re-asserted itself, and the nature of mortal man, who above all things desires the good things that he sees, be they ever so transient, ever so perishable!

Frank met Miss Trevelyan coming out at the vicarage gate, so simple, so fair, quite unlike the fine lady of Hardwicke, bound on an errand of mercy, carrying

in her hand a basket, containing some dainty for the poor parishioner she was going to visit, and carrying it with as much grace as a posy of flowers. She invited Mr. Gwynne to be her companion. She said, such comfort as he could administer was much wanted where she was going, quite as much as the delicate food that she was charged with.

Frank went at her word, rejoicing. And it was not ill for him to rejoice. Eleanour Trevelyan was kind, pure, and true to the heart's core, though she had not the strong devotion of a Ruth, though she could not be brave to follow him whithersoever he might think himself called to go. She must be dealt gentlier with; her lines must be laid for her in pleasant places. He felt, as he watched her performing her sweet offices of charity, that no heavier burden than these ought to be put upon her. And a certain tender sympathy, as for one softer and weaker than himself, filled his mind. After all there was a positive consolation in this—his love was worthy, he might cherish her memory, and hope to walk with her in the realms of glory, if here they must live and die apart.

The poor woman whom they had gone to see was bedridden; not aged, but very suffering, and often impatient. Her disease was slow but surely mortal, and the shadow of death was bitterly grievous to her. Eleanour had not skill to medicine the sick soul. She

could but speak kindly, look compassionately, and feel how weak and insufficient she was in a case of extreme need. She mentioned Mr. Gwynne's name as he followed her into the cottage, and the woman immediately said, "Ay, I remember him from a lad." Frank did not stay to enquire of her how or when she had known him, but as she appeared to be in a quiet, easy frame, he knelt and prayed for her, she clasping her hands and letting her eyes dwell on his face with a fluttering faint notion that he must be in the likeness of the angels of God. Eleanour knelt too, and when she rose from her knees there were traces of tears about her eyes, and her heart was aching and yearning for very anguish of love and grief and pity towards him whom it had chosen. His prayer had been for them all: for the afflicted woman, in the bonds of sin and death, that she might be delivered; for Eleanour, that she might become more and more a child of God; for himself, that he might be preserved blameless to the great day of the Lord; for them all, that they might be found at last meet inheritors of the heavenly kingdom. And there were a few words of personal supplication besides, that if it were well for their present and eternal peace, and in accordance with their Father's good pleasure, He would even bless them in this world, and give them grace to spend and be spent for each other in His holy service.

"Come again, sir," said the poor woman as Frank was preparing to leave her, and he promised that he would.

There was no conversation between himself and Eleanour as they returned to the town. The mind of both was full, and Eleanour especially was moved. When she arrived at the vicarage, she shut herself up in her own sitting-room, that pretty retreat where she had once received Mary Gwynne, bringing news of her brother, where her miniatures hung on the walls, and her favourite books were kept, and particular treasures. The dove-cote Frank had made was still in its original place below the window; and the doves were *roucouling* their monotonous love-song as she went in. It seemed to her as if all creatures were happy but men and women!

A book was lying on the table open—Tennant's India. She had been reading it before she went out, and had quitted it in disgust with the odious life that and other works on the East had given her a view of.

She seated herself now by the open window, and applied her mind to serious reflection. Of two things which was the easier? To give up home-comfort, or to give up heart's love? Of two things which was the nobler? To abide in secure ease and dulness of life, or to rush upon hazard and change with him who

adored her? For her ultimate satisfaction, finally, what was best to be done?

In a few days Francis Gwynne would be gone from Cornwall, not to return again. She knew his wishes perfectly, and she discerned that he was too generous to press them against her indecision. One while, she feared lest he would speak no more to her; another while, she dreaded lest he should speak so as to subdue her entirely to his will. She did not know what to do.

All that day and the next she was oppressed and dejected. The good Canon noticed it for some time before he offered her comfort. "As well put away your grievous thoughts first as last, Nelly. There is no room for perplexity. You are not going to India," was all he said—and not in an invincible tone.

"If my relatives set their faces against it, I do not expect that I *shall* go to India," replied Eleanour, and honestly supposed herself to be yielding to family pressure. It is much, however, to be doubted whether her surrender would have been so prompt if the garrison had not been faint-hearted. The Canon shrewdly surmised as much, but was too prudent a tactician to rouse a forlorn-hope of defiance. Eleanour brightened at once. "They would not let me go," she said to herself, and felt inwardly relieved at being spared the responsibility of a decision.

When Francis Gwynne saw Eleanour next, he per-

ceived at a glance that hope was over with him for the present. The plaintiveness of trouble and uncertainty had passed from her countenance. She would not talk of his going abroad—she would only talk of being at Croxton for Christmas, and in town for April and May, when they might possibly meet again. And even at the very last, she avoided formal words of farewell, reckoning half unconsciously, perhaps, on that possible meeting again. But Frank felt as if the parting were for ever!

With his sisters his parting *was* for ever, and they both had a presentiment of it. As for Martha, her days were numbered, and the tale of them almost run out. She opened her heart to her brother unreservedly before he left her, and he was enabled to go away with a good assurance of her coming humbly to the Fountain opened for sin; an assurance that was an exceeding comfort to him in his griefs. Mary was pledged to continue her home-journal in his absence, and she was to be married in October—she had a prospect before her which not even the tears she shed over her dear little Frank could cloud.

And these were the last days at Pengarvon.

X.

On the Eve of Departure.

IT was September when Francis Gwynne returned to Cambridge. The college was still empty, and his pupils were still absent. His pastoral duties, to which he resorted with more and more satisfaction as his knowledge of the poor increased, and his sympathies enlarged, did not yet occupy his whole time, and finding vacant hours often heavy on his hands, he resumed his study of Hindostanee, in anticipation of the future, when it would need to be a familiar tongue to him.

But in spite of work, prayer, and good resolutions, Eleanour perpetually haunted his imagination, and he missed the kind society of his home friends in the deserted college. Sometimes of an evening, when he was sitting alone, he fancied he heard the wash of the sea on the rustling fine shingle, and the whistle of the curlew in the wind—sounds that, when he listened more closely, resolved themselves into the crisp shivering of the leaves, and the shrill pipe of some gust gone astray in the long passages.

Hester Ryle's famous old book was become his permanent companion—he found there so much that suited his own feelings and circumstances. There the doctrine of self-renunciation for Christ's sake was all in all, and he strove with himself daily and hourly to bring his entire mind into willing conformity with it. A severe training this was, as everyone knows who has endeavoured after it in earnest. At times his very heart grew sick, but he was never left quite to himself, and in the midst of his failing and faintings, God's comforts refreshed his soul.

One evening, after dark, when he was resting by his fireside, his elbow on the table, his head on his hand, and open beside him "The Imitation," out of which he had been reading two or three chapters appropriate to his mood, there came a loud knock at his door, and a minute after entered his faithful friend Carden, with a rush of fresh air, and Frank's melancholy retrospections were forthwith put to flight. Carden came to stay, and was full of news, as he at once announced, and soon they were sociably composed for a long talk over Frank's tea-table.

"My first news is that I am going to be married," began Carden, plunging boldly into his confessions. "And now you will expect me to tell you what the lady is like. To my mind she is all that a woman ought to be—fair, wise, excellent."

"Let her be fair, wise, excellent as she may, she cannot be more than worthy of you, my friend!" cried Gwynne, and shook his hand with hearty congratulation. "I wish you had to reciprocate my valedictions!"

"Then it is decided—Miss Trevelyan will not go to India?" said Carden, his own joy sobered in sympathy with Frank's evident trouble and disappointment—keenly renewed, at the moment, by the spectacle of Carden's satisfaction.

"It is as bad as decided. She will not go. I dared not urge it, and I try not to regret it. If it must be so, doubtless it is for the best. But a truce to my moon-struck dreams! Let me rather hear about your happy affairs. What are you proposing to marry on—not your Fen Ditton curacy?"

"By no means! be ready again with your congratulations, little Gwynne! I am a beneficed clergyman; I have been presented to the living of East Raven—five hundred a year, and a comfortable parsonage-house, and in a beautiful country too, in Wiltshire, and not far from the borders of the New Forest."

"Fortune is using you well, Carden—using you as you deserve. But who is your patron?"

"The squire of East Raven himself, Sir Peter Lawson, whose elder daughter is the lady of my love—you did not give me time to tell you her name before.

And my distant rich kinswoman, with whom I visited the Isle of Wight, because I shall be in no need of her money, has now, of course, made a will in my favour, and promised I know not what in the way of marriage settlements. I am scarcely grown accustomed to the contemplation of my wonderful luck yet. Why should it befall me? Not because of my merits, certainly."

"You are a thorough good fellow, Carden; you will make the best of husbands and country parsons."

"I intend to do my endeavours to that end."

"But you have been very close about all this. Your intelligence comes with a shock. Has the wooing been long adoing?"

"No. And to the last I was unsure! Lucy—that is the dear name of her—left me all the courting to do, and vouchsafed me no crumb of encouragement. She persists now that she *did*, but I vow that I never saw anything of the sort until I had stammered out my humble worship, when she certainly gave me as winsome a smile and blush as ever lightened a woman's countenance. And she will be more bountiful in future, for she is of a genial, generous disposition. I always said, if you remember, that when I married I should look out for a comfortable, happy-tempered soul, and I have found her. They are a cheerful family altogether."

Carden was fluent on the subject of his marriage,

beyond anything that Frank had ever known of him before; he was, indeed, in capital luck, and had the grace and gratitude boldly to testify his contentment. Doctor Cornelius, he said, was well pleased with the turn of events, and had promised him a visit after he was married and settled. In fact, all the clouds that had descended upon him a few years back in consequence of his falling short of the family expectations as to his degree were happily dispersed, and being in such high favour with Fortune now, he was graciously forgiven her past neglects.

The beginning of term time brought back Francis Gwynne's full occupations, and he was beset with business, friends, and pupils, until he often regretted his previous loneliness, which had been so wearisome in possession. In Cambridge it was the regular routine of teaching, preaching, and studying again, while Mary's journal kept him up to the news of home, and was a welcome visitant in the ruddy autumnal days both before and after her marriage. She transmitted it to him in portions as opportunity offered; and the first portion sent after his return to the University contained the history of the breaking up of their old home, preparatory to the wedding.

"BERRY HILL, October 6.

"You know, dear, that Aunt Hannah has a decided will of her own, and when we were fully assured that

it was not her wish to remain in the old house, nor to move to Berry Hill, nor to live with us at Clifden, we left her to mature her own plans, and to tell us what she would really like. We all think her decision as judicious as possible. She is at Berry Hill with me now, but when I go to Clifden, she is to go too—not to the parsonage, but to a pretty cottage where the clerk and his wife live, who will gladly let her have two rooms, and attend to her comfort in every respect. And she will not be more than a stone's-throw from us, which makes me quite happy; for I could not bear to think that good Aunt Hannah, who took such care of us all when we were children, should be left to herself, and perhaps neglected in her old age.

"Turning out the old house was a sadder task than I can tell you. There were a hundred things stored away in the presses and cupboards, for no earthly purpose but keeping alive pathetic recollections. Aunt Hannah never liked to make away with anything that had belonged to the dead; and I found all our dear mother's clothing that she had left, and some garments of her own laying by too. There were her wedding-gown, a simple printed linen, yellow as a guinea, and the christening robe we all of us wore in turn, almost as bad. There were your baby-shoes, of scarlet kid, a coral with silver bells, and a queer little braided cap, which, I suppose, once covered your pretty, fair

curls—they *were* pretty, and they *were* fair once, for I can recollect them like spun silk, though you will hardly believe it. And in the same press were my father's belongings—his spectacles, compasses, pencils, and many folio sheets covered with diagrams. I wonder what they all mean, and whether they are worth anything. William Murchison has them to look over, and the remainder of his books, which Aunt Hannah would never allow to quit their shelves before, though they were of no use to us. Here, too, I found your early letters from Cambridge, and I laid hands myself on that precious little hoard. Whatever you do, Frank, save me your journals. Never destroy a leaf!

"Some favourite pieces of furniture have gone to Clifden to help the plenishing of our modest parsonage; amongst them, the large walnut press that stood lately in your room, the table of curious carved Indian work, my father's cabinet, and the comfortable large sofa that used to be below mother's window in the parlour. Martha did not care to have any of the old-fashioned things, but in our house they will be quite suitable, and I like to have something visible about me that belongs to my past life. In the summer I was successful in taking several slips from my father's beautiful foreign shrubs; scarcely one has failed, and as the garden at Clifden is both sunny and sheltered, we shall get them to grow very well. Philip is as fond of his garden as my father was.

Ah, Frank, I never imagined that God had such happiness in store for me as I now enjoy! Dear Mattie takes the keenest interest in my preparations, and thinks less of herself than ever. She is not so languid as she was in the hot weather, and this rally gives us all hopes that her life may be prolonged. Hester continues here, and is like a saint in the house.

"I have not seen Miss Trevelyan since you left us. She went away a day or two after you, on a tour of visits, from which she has not yet returned. The good Vicar is by himself, but does not appear to pine in his solitude. He walks out with Sandy, and was on Berry Edge last week watching the fleet pass. His elder nephew was on board one of the ships—the *Victory*. They say we must soon have some sharp fighting again—God defend the right! The year is drawing towards its end under heavy clouds. But we all have faith here in the star of England and of Nelson!"

The next extract from Mary's journal, by which the story may be most clearly carried on, bears date six weeks after her marriage, and is written at Clifden.

"CLIFDEN, December 10.

"If I neglect this little journal now and then, dear Frank, you must ascribe the neglect not to forgetfulness, but to absence of leisure. My new life is very full with its new duties and pleasures; and those half-

hours of idleness that used to be devoted to you come much less often. Some one else claims them. But just now he is deep in a learned theological review that Doctor Cornelius has lent him, and I am quite free for a chat with you.

"Where shall I take up the thread of my discourse? We are married and settled—you knew that a month ago; and we are all in health and spirits, except poor Martha, who is suffering again terribly with her throat. She has been here once with Willie, and was pleased with our old parsonage, but she says I shall never be the excellent housewife that she has been. I think that very likely; so perhaps it is a good thing that we are ever so much poorer than they, and have fewer servants and fine possessions to overlook. I am beautifully content. It seems that I only want one person within reach to make my happiness complete; you can guess who that is, my dear. Philip and I talk of you continually. I can resign you with a firmer heart than I could have done had I been alone; but, oh, your going to India will make a great breach in the circle of my friends! I never had many, and you were the dearest of them all! It feels so strange when I think that you are lost to us—that in the ordinary course of events you will never return to us any more. Colonel Harley spoke of it to Philip as quite an understood thing that a chaplain in the Company's service, when he went out to India, went out

for life. My only comfort under this thought is that we have given each other the meeting in a better country.

"The 14th.—I have had a visit from Miss Trevelyan—a farewell visit. It is much, she says, if they ever come back to Pengarvon. The Doctor feels the fatigue of the long journey so extremely now. He vowed last year that he would not come into Cornwall again; but his niece prevailed with him for one autumn more by our beautiful sea, the cliffs, and the Common, and this is to be the last. She carries Sandy and the doves to Croxton this time, she bade me tell you. She was looking wonderfully handsome and strong—what a perfection of health she enjoys! Still, I fancied her rather sad. She fell often into pauses of silence while we were talking, and recollected herself with an effort. Then she made many of those little speeches which savour of the philosophy that comes of regrets and disappointments. She is not quite satisfied with herself. But why do I tell you this? It will only distress you.

"Her younger brother has joined his ship, the *Invincible*; so they are both afloat again, and this gives her anxiety—but half the world are anxious for fathers, husbands, brothers, sons, just now. Mrs. Bell has had a second stroke of paralysis, more serious than the first, and this is the reason they are hurrying to Croxton

before their time. Sir George Hardwicke, as you probably know, is in office again, and a very great man. Miss Trevelyan expressed a hope that he might be able to use his influence in your favour with somebody more influential still; but these wheels within wheels are too perplexing for me, and I prefer to believe that my dear Frank will get what he wants by his own weight and merits, and not by any of the interest, bribery, and corruption of which there is so much in high places. She was hard to convince that I had nothing new to tell her concerning you; I assured her that you could not leave England without receiving Priest's Orders, though probably, when your appointment was made, you would have to sail with brief delay. Then she speculated whether she should be in London or at Hardwicke or at Croxton. You would embark at Portsmouth, would you not? If you miss seeing her in London or the neighbourhood, it would be almost in your way to touch at Croxton on your journey down. Ah me! how quietly I write of it all, as if my heart were not wrung! But you love one another; and when two persons love one another, it is not wise, I think, to spare themselves the pain of a farewell, because long and long after the pain is worn out the memory of kind last words survive."

It was the furthest thought possible from Francis Gwynne's mind to avoid any pain that the sight of Eleanour Trevelyan might occasion him. He dwelt

on every line and word of Mary's journal, and assured himself again and again that he would by no means neglect her counsel. But now the thread of communication was broken. He had no correspondence with Eleanour, and how should he know her whereabouts?

At the beginning of the New Year, while he was casting about to learn it with certainty, he received an official letter summoning him to attend the India House, with a view to his immediate departure for Calcutta; a good appointment was at his service, on the Bengal Establishment, the salary 1,200*l.* Ten days was all the interval between the summons and the date fixed for his embarkation, and he went up to London at once to arrange for a necessary delay —till the sailing of the next fleet in the spring or the early summer. He had friends in the India House of power enough to obtain him this grace, and his future position being at last absolutely decided, he had next to set about making his preparations for it.

"You will have now to fight against worldliness," said Mr. Barrington, on hearing of his excellent appointment—one that was always the object of much competition when vacant.

And another gentleman, who knew India by experience, volunteered his advice that Mr. Gwynne should marry. "In fact," said he, "you will be mad

to go out unmarried;" and he cited a special warning in the instance of a young promising chaplain who had made complete shipwreck of life and hope by exposing himself alone to the temptations of the gay and free society assembled at the military stations.

Frank lent them his ears. Marry! he would be glad to marry—only there was but one woman in the world for him!

Then came a grave opinion on the other side. That old north-country parson, who had been the original instrument of his dedication to missionary work, strongly advised him not to encumber himself with family cares. "You will be worth twice as much free, Mr. Gwynne," said he. "If I were going to India, a wife would be about the last luxury I should dream of hampering myself with."

Frank told him about Eleanour Trevelyan. The enthusiastic old bachelor shook his head more vehemently than ever. "A beautiful, fine lady wife would be as bad to you as a white elephant—she would ruin you!" cried he.

"Nay, I do not believe it. A high-bred woman is the most enduring of her sex," rejoined Frank warmly. "If I could be sure of what is God's will concerning us! If I could be sure that it is zeal for help in His service animates me, and not a mere selfish affection!"

The old man smiled shrewdly, yet kindly: "You may be very sure that there is a little spice of self in it, Mr. Gwynne. But as the matter does not rest entirely with you to decide, enquire of the lady what *her* will is: that, I take it, will be the plainest sign for you of what God's will is."

This seemed undeniable. If Eleanour would *not*, then he might cease to vex himself with vain hope. Ah, if he could!

Meanwhile he took earnest thought with himself while he was going about his business of preparation for the long voyage; and early in February he wrote to Eleanour, addressing the letter under cover to the Canon at Croxton. A week, a fortnight elapsed, and there came no answer. It was impossible to suppose that Doctor Trevelyan had suppressed his letter; the only explanation of her silence was that Eleanour could not bring herself to answer him as he desired, and that therefore she deferred to answer him at all. He did not write again. He determined to wait for an opportunity of seeing her.

It was now March, and his engagements in Cambridge being all but formally relinquished, he stayed in London until he was ordained Priest, residing in the house of his north-country friend, making a little acquaintance with the world, with the treasures of

town, and with certain gentlemen whose connection with the East and with missions gave them a lively interest in the enthusiastic young scholar. He came in contact with many persons of rank and distinction, some of whom invited him to their houses; but nothing he saw of the pomps and vanities of the world had the smallest attraction for him. He anticipated his departure from England with some natural weakness and shrinking, but he wrote to Carden at this very time that he had never felt a clearer conviction of his call.

One day Sir George Hardwicke invited him to dinner at Kensington, and introduced him to his fellow-guests as a late Senior Wrangler. But they were all men of politics, fashion, or gallantry, and Frank found himself more a curiosity amongst them than a companion. He stood for ever so long alone at one of the windows looking out into the bare garden, where once, in its beauty, he had walked with Eleanour, and no one appeared to notice his isolation. Lady Hardwicke did not smile so gracious a welcome upon him as at his former visit, and he fancied himself used with a careless, almost insolent neglect. He was passing, in fact, beyond the sphere of her ambition, and she had ceased to feel any personal interest in him. Frank was relieved to escape early from the gay formalities of her little court to the fireside and evening pipe of his plain old friend, the Yorkshire

parson. And beyond a single enquiry, whether Canon Trevelyan and his niece were still at Croxton, which was answered in the affirmative, he neither heard nor mentioned Eleanour's name.

It was the middle of March when he received Priest's Orders in St. James's Chapel from the hands of the Bishop of London, and shortly after he went down to Cambridge to take his leave of his friends. He preached his farewell sermon in Trinity Church to a crowded congregation; and that solemn event over, it seemed to him that he was only waiting to depart: that now had closed the easy pleasant age of his life, an age enriched by every earthly comfort, by the caresses of friends and the praise of good men; that now had begun the age of renunciation, when he must cast behind him every dream of ambition, reputation, worldly honour—perhaps, also, every dream of dear affection.

The days and weeks now slipped by with redoubled speed. It was too late to expect that Miss Trevelyan could be prevailed on to sail with him; but certain of Frank's friends refused to let the subject of his marriage rest. Their well-meant interference was but a useless renewal of sorrow, which, combined with his other cares, overstrained him both body and spirit. One morning he accompanied the captain of the Indiaman in which he was to sail, in a drive down to

Deptford, where it was then lying to take in baggage and stores for the long voyage. They passed through a small inn and came out by the water-side, close upon the black hull of the huge ship. The sudden view of it, and the flood of feelings, joyful and woeful, that poured over Frank's soul at the sight, were too much for his endurance; and after the strong effort of self-control that he was compelled to exercise at the moment, came a violent reaction, a fit of convulsions, a period of insensibility, and several days of extreme weakness and depression.

It was a brilliant May afternoon when he next went abroad into the streets, and, walking towards St. James's Palace, he was witness of a popular spectacle —the nobility going to court. He stood in the crowd for some time to watch; for it occurred to him that amidst this mingling of youth in its flower, and age, more fit for its coffin than for full dress, finery, and jewels, he might possibly see Eleanour and her aunt Lady Hardwicke. But he watched in vain. No Eleanour embellished that day's gala. Sir George and his lady passed alone in their state coach, pompous, splendid, and silent; and when Frank had seen them descend and enter the palace, he pushed his way out of the throng, and continued his walk in the park in much happier spirits. He was rejoiced beyond measure not to have seen Eleanour in that glittering train. If he had seen her there he said to himself, he should have

been utterly assured that she never could be a wife for him. And thus the disappointment of his eyes cheered his mind. Still he might cling to hope. But why, *why* had she not answered his letter?

XI.

Good-bye! Good-bye!

WHY had not Eleanour Trevelyan answered Francis Gwynne's letter? She had not seen it yet.

The worthy Doctor, her uncle, had arrived at that period of existence when such men as he cease to take a very lively interest in the letters of their friends. He was no longer on the look-out for promotion; they had made him Canon of Croxton, and he desired no more. Time and death had thinned the circle of his contemporaries, and his correspondence with the world that still wrestled with hopes and fears, had dwindled down to a very few leaves indeed. Occasionally letters reached him as reminders of half-forgotten friendships, and he would bestir himself to send an answer; but if these letters were very long, or in a crabbed hand, the odds were that he did not read them through. Others, of which he recognised or believed he recognised the writing, he would lay aside unopened, and finally push into a sort of library dust-bin, the receptacle of pamphlets and reports, there to await his leisure on a rainy day—leisure, it need hardly be said, which never came. Amongst these neglected

epistles was Francis Gwynne's. The Doctor, glancing at the address without his spectacles, attributed it to quite another person—a long-winded, tedious person of no account in his esteem, and he dropped it into his dust-bin without a qualm. And there it might have lain, unknown and unsuspected, until the bi-annual clearance of the collection, had not Eleanour been one day sent to search for a mislaid political squib of exceeding pungency, which the Doctor wanted to read to his friend the Dean. Eleanour found the squib; she found also Frank's letter, the seal inviolate, the post-date weeks and months old; *she* knew the writing fast enough, and she carried it into the parlour in much perturbation and distress of mind.

"Dear uncle, did you know that a letter from Mr. Gwynne had been thrown into your dust-bin unread, unopened even?" said she, laying it down before him with reproachful solemnity, after waiting till the Dean was gone.

"A letter from Mr. Gwynne? no such thing, Nell! I have had no letter from Gwynne—this is from Nethersole," cried the Canon, peremptory in self-exculpation.

"Just break the seal and see," said Eleanour, with a dejected fall in her voice.

"Francis Gwynne, so it is, and here is an enclosure for you; it is your affair entirely. I am hugely sorry, Nell; what can I say? I am hugely sorry. But if you

had had it at first, it would have made no real difference, you know." The Canon was indeed ashamed, dismayed, and his plea in extenuation of consequences was shabby. Three months had the letter lain in limbo!

"Ah! but he will have felt it so unkind," said Eleanour. And then she went away to her chamber to read this out-of-date letter from her lover.

Poor Frank! He had not dared to write very urgently. He seemed to have had the incubus of doubt upon his pen, and to have been held in check by a sense that he was asking too much—unreasonably much. Yet it was a manly, tender letter enough. Eleanour dwelt on its expressions with soft satisfaction. "It is too late now—there has been a fate in it," said she, and tried to convince herself that had it been in time she *might* have gone with him to India. She gave herself credit for that measure of self-devotion; and in the letter she sent to Frank, enclosed in the Canon's apology, there were words and phrases on which he could hardly fail to put that interpretation. He did so interpret them, and a mild consolatory glow therefrom was shed upon his future, which he accepted for what it was worth.

He could not greatly rejoice, for almost simultaneously with Eleanour's letter had come intelligence that the Indiaman had left the river, and would take her last passengers on board at Portsmouth that day

week. Frank had everything in readiness for a start, and most of his farewells said. According to a pre-arrangement between them, he despatched a warning to James Carden to meet him at the ship, and another to Mr. Barrington. The old Yorkshire parson was to travel with him down to Portsmouth, and willingly consented to start a mail earlier, that Frank might have the one day in Croxton that he had set his heart upon.

Only one day! And thus it came to pass that while Eleanour was looking for some little further news of her lover, he appeared in person. At the first glance she understood that he was come to bid her good-bye, and all the colour left her face in a moment.

"Oh, Frank, you are going!" sobbed she; and then she knew at last how dearly she loved him.

They were in her parlour together and alone for a long while. It was the loveliest, serenest of June days. There were roses out in the garden, and the swallows were come back from the south to their nesting-places under the cathedral eaves. It was a sweet English scene in the Close: when would he, would he *ever* see the like again? Just before noon the bells rang out in a glad, loud peal—there was a grand wedding in the city—for years the echo of those bells was in Frank's memory.

"I do not understand how you have brought your

mind to give it all up, Gwynne," said the Canon, who joined them at length. "But you will not lose your reward; you serve the best of masters. I suppose that the generations to come will hold you up as a bright example of what great and good men can forego in God's service. Your contemporaries at school and college will be proud to tell how they knew you; and Nell, here, when she is an old woman, will count it her title of honour that Francis Gwynne loved her."

There was a prophetic tone in the old man's voice, as if he knew that this good-bye was for all time. So it struck on Frank's heart, so it struck on Eleanour's, and she laid her face in her hands, weeping bitterly. There are great solemnities of life that always take us unprepared, that are always sudden, let us have anticipated them ever so long before. Such is the death of a friend; such is that forestalling of death, far separation. Eleanour Trevelyan was not light-minded, but she had suffered this event of Francis Gwynne's departure for India to lie quite unrealised in its results. She had never played with it in her imagination—had never tried to think how it would be with her when he was gone. Perhaps the true secret of this was that she had not actually believed he ever would go; she had half-consciously trusted in the chapter of accidents—in some failure of his courage, his resolution. And now this absolute, immediate parting affected her like

the very rending asunder of soul and body. For she loved him sincerely. She was at Croxton now, instead of in town with her great lady aunt, because she loved Francis Gwynne; because she would not listen to any suggestion of wooing and wedding elsewhere; because a fine match had been proposed to her, and she would none of it.

'The good Canon, subdued to tender sympathy by their distress, withdrew again that they might have their final words alone. Oh, how ardently Frank wished that Eleanour possessed the courage to share his fortunes! He spoke to persuade her that his life would not be so terribly severe that she need shrink from sharing it. He would have a competence, and more than a competence. Other women, delicately nurtured as herself, undertook similar lives daily, and undertook them without fear. Eleanour heard him eagerly—any hope at that sad moment seemed better than none.

"But you will return?" she said.

"*Not* if God spare my health and strength; *not* if I am of use in my vocation. Only the sense that I am wasting my power for nought would induce me to take my hand from the plough, once it is laid to the field. But, Eleanour, if you would wait for my coming back years hence, it would not be much more to come out and join me."

"I could not leave them all—they would not let me leave them."

"In the course of nature they must leave *you*. Then you will be alone—*then* will you come to me?"

Eleanour's tears fell like rain. "I dare not promise. But, O Frank! believe that I love you."

"You will let me write to you? You will write to me again?"

"Oh, yes, yes—it will be all that we shall have!"

"God for ever bless you!"

These were almost their last words. They stood for a little while after, their arms clasped about each other, their tears and kisses—their first and last kisses!—mingled together, and then Francis Gwynne went, sobbing in his throat still, "God for ever bless her! God for ever bless her!"

Eleanour cried as if her heart would break—called herself weak, unworthy, poor, and miserable! She saw herself without pity—she regarded her own conduct with scorn. The Doctor looked gravely on at her repentance, and assured himself that it would pass; that this violent excess of emotion would be by no means so lasting as the prudent, careful self-consideration which had actuated her judgment before. But he was glad to see her so moved, so animated by a transient nobleness of passion, though he would just as certainly have been vexed to extreme indignation against them both had Francis Gwynne prevailed with

her to be his companion to India. Neither for himself nor for those belonging to him did the jolly old Canon ever desire the strain of living up to their highest possible good. And Eleanour had fallen short of her standard, like the rest of them. She knew it now—she saw it. Her eyes were opened to the just proportions of what she had thrown away, and what she had kept! It would have been lofty, sweet, and true in her to have cast in her lot with Frank's, and she had meanly and cautiously withheld herself, because she feared the heat, the cold, the strangeness, the difficulty of it; because she feared to leave her little comfortable places, her luxuries, the pleasant glow of gay society, the charm of dress, of polished flattery. How she hated all these things in her remorse! how trivial and poor and low they seemed in comparison of what she had cast behind her—a noble life, softened and exalted by the love and worship of a man holy, honourable, devoted, whom even the selfish and worldly reverenced, wondered at, and praised! Already she began to feel and see that this love, which she had so lightly esteemed while it was in her hand to hold or to reject, would become indeed, as the Doctor had said in the presence of them both, her title of honour. And she might have won a yet higher if she had done what she could—the name of a good wife, a faithful helpmeet.

Was it yet too late? When her test-time came

again, would her courage have grown up to the occasion? Would she be ready to go to him in India, when other ties were broken, other claims withdrawn? She had not dared to promise that she would, even while the strong influence of his entreaty was in her ears. And she did not distrust herself for nothing. She had proved her own insufficiency. But in the hours of bitter anguish and regret that followed his departure, she believed, she sincerely believed, that if her opportunity returned, she should be both able and willing to do and suffer all things for him. She felt as we all feel towards our dead when they have passed beyond the sphere of reparation—that *now* we would give all the world to repair what we have done to them amiss!

"It is best as it is, Nell," said the Doctor, trying to soothe her. "It is the issue of your cooler judgment, remember."

"Ah, yes! I wish you had helped me to take the higher path. That was the right path," said she, and wept, refusing to be comforted. The terror of her conscience was, "I shall never see him more! I shall never see him more!"

To Portsmouth with James Carden came Doctor Cornelius, then on a visit to his nephew and his new wife at East Raven, and theirs were the first figures Francis Gwynne recognised in the turmoil and bustle of the High Street, as he descended with his York-

shire parson from the chaise in which they had posted from Croxton. They met all with words of good cheer; they visited the Indiaman in company, heard that the fleet would not sail for a day or two yet, and were glad of the respite. Some partings are best got over quickly; but these excellent men had a serious satisfaction in being together a little while longer; and when Mr. Barrington and two other Cambridge associates of Frank's joined them, bringing him a gift of a silver compass from his University friends, they were as happy amongst themselves as perhaps ever in their lives. They crossed to the Isle of Wight, they sailed through the Solent to the Needles, and up Southampton Water. They had a Sunday together, and the next morning, the signal to sail being given, and the fleet getting under weigh, his friends went all on board with Frank for the last time, and after joining in prayer in a corner of the ship, took their leave of him, sorrowing as for one whose face they should behold no more.

Frank watched the boat receding that carried them ashore, with a stunned sensation of grief, loneliness, and loss. It was a glorious day. The water glittered and danced in the sunshine and the light fresh breeze, and as ship after ship warped out of the harbour, and with canvas spread and flags flying sailed stately down the Channel, the scene was beautiful. The wind continued fair for them that day and night, and

all the next day, and at the hour of the evening gun the fleet passed Falmouth. The following morning they sighted the Mount and the Lizard, and the coast of Cornwall continued visible after sunset.

Frank stayed on deck half through the sweet summer night. He almost fancied that he could see Pengarvon Church and Beacon. He did not doubt but that some of them at home, when they heard that the fleet was coming down Channel, had gone up to the old tower to watch:—perhaps poor Martha had dragged her feeble steps to Berry Edge, unable to drag them any farther. His heart was inexpressibly softened by these thoughts. A profound depression and anguish laid hold upon him. He felt weak as water—his faith failed him. Hours of exceeding bitterness passed over his soul, and when he lay down to rest his sleep was broken by cruel dreams and by memories that would not be still. He had foreseen this trial of his fortitude; but while his spirit was overwhelmed within him, he could not realise the loving power of the Everlasting Arms that had sustained him hitherto. He could but hide his face from the darkness, and wait till the light was revealed to him again.

On the morrow the shores of England were lost to sight, and it was “Good-bye” to them for ever!

XII.

The Voyage to India Sixty-five Years Ago.

PEOPLE make excursions to India now-a-days by way of holiday tour; but when Francis Gwynne went out, at the beginning of the century, there was no overland route, no rail or steam to bring remote parts of the world together, and the wearisome voyage round by the Cape was prolonged for several months —in his instance, by reason of the war that was going on, for nearly ten months.

Often had he both thought and spoken with exultation of his call to preach the Gospel to the heathen, and as often had his weakness recoiled from the sacrifices and sufferings it must entail; but all that he had pictured to himself of discouragement and physical misery fell far short of what he found had to be endured even before the fleet was out of the narrow seas. Bad weather overtook it off the coast of Ireland, and some of the ships sustained injuries that compelled the Commodore to anchor in the Cove of Cork while they underwent repairs.

This delay laid them open to another and more serious detention. The whole kingdom was at this

time in breathless suspense and fear of immediate invasion, and orders reached the Commodore to wait in Cork Harbour, in case his ships might be required. Since the 15th of May, Consul Bonaparte had become Napoleon the First, Emperor of the French, and to lower the pride of England was his next mighty ambition. But Nelson was now afloat again, and the Battle of Trafalgar told another tale! The naval strength of France was broken on that famous day, and the liberties of Europe were saved.

The *Union* East Indiaman, in which Francis Gwynne had secured a cabin, carried troops—the 59th regiment—and a few passengers, officers' wives and others; and while the fleet lay at anchor, all who had the freedom availed themselves of the opportunity of going ashore, and of visiting and making acquaintances on board the other ships.

The chaplain did as the rest did. His heart was still very sore with the pains of parting, and his life and position on shipboard proved trying, distressing beyond anything that it had been possible for him to conceive beforehand. He had yet discovered no sympathising friend to help and countenance his efforts for good. The captain permitted only one Divine service a week, and for what else he might do amongst the crowds in the ship he had to depend on his private ministrations. Daily he went between-decks, and gathered the few together who had inclination or

leisure to listen, while he read to them from some religious book, fit to interest such a mixed multitude. His most constant hearers were poor women, the wives of the soldiers, who would bring their sewing, their knitting, or babies asleep in their arms, and sit a little while, then move away, leaving their places to others. The sailors last relieved from the watch were to be seen strewn along the deck, fast asleep; and looking down from above would be two or three idlers, attentive for five minutes perhaps, but soon tired, and then strolling off indifferent.

The Sunday service also put the young chaplain's meekness and patience to a severe test. His audience was quite unlike the dignified, orderly congregations he had been used to address. There was little sense of decorum amongst the passengers of superior rank. Some were as heedless and irreverent as children, and in religious matters as ignorant as children. The captain and officers would sit drinking and talking noisily within earshot of the preacher, and their example was the pattern that the little world below them followed with coarse exaggeration. The feeling of isolation in the midst of this alien company was terrible to Francis Gwynne. Ah, if he had been sent out with a fellow-worker, how they might have strengthened each other's hands! Or if Eleanour had been with him:—almost he determined that on his landing in India he would entreat her to come out to him.

Hitherto Francis Gwynne's course had run smoothly amongst quiet-living, pious, and learned folk, but now he was thrown amidst many miseries, and he began to see what the masses of the world were—how rude, uncultured, cruel, wicked. In the fleet were two convict-ships bound for Botany Bay, and on board one of them, freighted with women, he went in the expectation of being allowed to give some instruction, comfort, and hope in alleviation of their wretchedness. The ship was in a most iniquitous state as regards discipline, but remonstrance with captain or crew was only breath wasted. They treated what the minister of religion said with the utmost levity and contempt—it was the fashion of the world then. These were still the days of a terrible penal code, and many amongst the forlorn crowd were condemned, perhaps, to expiate the temptation of an hour's want by a life of utter woe. They had no Bibles, no Prayer-books; and though Mr. Gwynne was permitted to speak to them, and give them a few tracts, leave to preach in the ship was denied him. One poor soul, in deep emotion, whispered an enquiry if he was a Roman priest, and he talked to her of the loving Father who heareth in secret—bidding her open her burdened heart to Him; but beyond this, and praying for her and her companions in misery, he might do nothing.

In his own ship, however, his sincerity, boldness, and courage won him, by degrees, a certain de-

ference and respect. He never shrank from rebuking gross misconduct, and his Sunday audience was shamed into better behaviour when they learnt that their young chaplain was no poor, illiterate shaveling, but a scholar of the highest distinction and character. His readings between-decks grew quite popular when he opened the "Pilgrim's Progress," that wonderful book! and here and there appeared for him an advocate amongst the men, who dared to take his part against the insolent scorn of his opponents. The first of these was the mate, a rough, good-natured old salt, who would not profess much piety on his own account, but yet stood the chaplain's staunch defender. "If you don't want religion yourself, why hinder them that do?" said he to a young officer who was jeering and jibing with several others against the parson. "You laugh and brag now, but wait a bit till your own consciences are overhauled."

The delay at Cork was beneficial to Francis Gwynne. It released him awhile from the pressure of physical incapacity, and though he knew it must recur and continue, the pause of rest allowed him to rally his strength anew. His constant prayer to God was, that in the suffering which lay before him his soul might rise above the body; that he might be made patient, peaceful, and resigned. And in fact, when, after a detention of near a month, the fleet again put to sea, though ill and very ill, his dejection was less extreme,

and frequent glimpses of heavenly consolation and serenity enabled him to suffer without repining.

The fleet, Indiaman and transports together, numbered twenty-three ships, and the convoy consisted of four frigates, the *Diadem*, *Curlew*, *Invincible*, and *Sea-King*. They left Cork Harbour with a fair wind and fine weather, but this happy prospect was of no long continuance. The wind turned against them, and blew steadily for some days from the south-west, increasing every hour until the adverse gale rose to a tremendous storm. A night of general consternation and anxiety prevailed on board the *Union*. When daylight appeared the ship was going under bare poles, and the sea and sky were obliterated by the mist of rain and spray, which only revealed the angry crests of the nearest waves that seemed to be running over the windward side of the ship. The *Union* was a heavy sailer, the heaviest in the fleet; and when the weather cleared a little, all the other ships were out of sight, and to the perils of wind and tempest was added the risk of being taken by the French and Dutch privateers, that infested the coasts, on the lookout for merchantmen separated from their convoy. This danger was, however, escaped. The fleet had made but little way, and a favourable wind the next morning carried the *Union* into the midst of it again.

On the following Sunday the chaplain read the Thanksgiving Prayer after a Storm, but already the

terror of death had lost its effect on the majority of his hearers, and an attempt to reason with some on their evil or reckless lives was very ill received. His friend the mate had left off swearing, but there were a few amongst the soldiers who seemed to delight in vexing his ears with blasphemy, and when he rebuked them a mocking sneer to his face, or a derisive laugh the moment his back was turned, was his reward. But so far was he from being daunted by such insults, that he achieved more force and eloquence in his preaching, and became stern as one of the old Puritans in denouncing the judgments of God against evil doers. And his influence spread. Several of the cadets thankfully accepted his offer to instruct them in mathematics, and others obtained his assistance in reading French. Amongst the soldiers he found a few who were glad to learn to sing hymns with him, for the singing's sake, if for nothing else; and one of their superior officers, Major Fraser, grew so attached to the chaplain's society that he was a frequent interruption to the chaplain's own studies and seasons of holy collectedness, meditation, and prayer.

Presently there came another break in the dull monotony of life at sea. One fine afternoon of September they sighted Madeira. Throughout the morning all on board the *Union* had been busy with their glasses looking out for land, and as soon as the

majestic heights of Porto Santo appeared on the horizon five or six leagues away, everybody was astir, making preparations for going ashore. The chaplain was as pleased as the rest. The fleet anchored before Funchal, and at first landing the foreign aspect of the place and people was delightful to his untravelled English eyes. He took his way up the parade under the orange trees, amidst a throng of strange figures—black-skirted priests, nun-like women, market-folk with loads of fruit—apples, pears, grapes, almonds, bananas, and peasants goading their yokes of oxen. He had brought letters to a merchant residing at Funchal, and this gentleman made him welcome to his house during the stay of the *Union*—an opportune hospitality, for the two inns of the town were already crowded with the officers of a West Indian fleet.

On Sunday he attended the celebration of high mass in the great church, the golden splendour of which surpassed anything that he had ever seen at home; for ecclesiastical neglect was supreme in England at this date, and our houses of God were the worst-kept houses in the kingdom. But the masque of worship revolted his Protestant feelings; and except in one poor negro woman who was praying apart, and crossing herself with an expression of heart-broken contrition on her face, he saw nothing to lessen the painful effect on his mind of the formal, gorgeous

display, the incense burning before pictures of saints, the mystical bowings and gestures of the priests, and the careless irreverence of the devotees.

After three days, to take in water and fresh supplies, the fleet left Madeira. The army that it was carrying out was destined for the war that England was then waging with the Dutch for possession of the Cape of Good Hope, but only now were the orders promulgated, and the prospect of being soon engaged in active service sent the soldiers to sea again in high spirits. Whether they would first touch at Teneriffe, at one of the West Indian islands, or at San Salvador, was still left a matter of speculation to those not in the secret councils of the commanders; but wherever they might touch, the chaplain tried to make the men he had a spiritual charge over reflect upon that danger they were daily drawing nearer to, and the spirit in which it would be most boldly encountered.

His own life was becoming one of much suffering. Extreme languor oppressed him in the heat of the tropics, impeding his present labours, and threatening to impair his future efficiency. He feared sometimes that he should be useless as a preacher in India, then that he should never see India at all, but should perish by the way. Still he cast his cares upon God, and endeavoured to do His will and bear His will patiently in existing circumstances, without anxious thought for what might be to come. Only by taking

such short views of life was it made tolerable, endurable, as the long-drawn months of the voyage wore down his delicate frame by their accumulated hardships.

And yet his condition was far preferable to that of many around him. He had his little cabin to himself, and his books; but the soldiers were cramped in dark narrow space, and the want of fresh meat, of sweet air and water, was bringing on the common result of fever and dysentery. The chaplain would carry to the sick his own portion of fresh food, of wine, and sit in the stifling gloom beside their beds, reciting to them the words of eternal peace when he could not see to read; and as the painful weeks dragged on, often and more often was he called upon to commit his poor brother to the deep with the solemn prayers of resurrection and life everlasting.

The fleet touched at San Salvador, and lay there near a fortnight, which was another wholesome relief to the overwrought frames of the men. It sailed again early in December, and it was on New Year's Day that the highlands of the Cape were sighted, eight miles off. Immediately began the anxious bustle of preparing to land—not for a pleasant change and variety this time, but for the hazards of war. The women were in bitter distress. Three of the officers, whose wives were on board the *Union*, entrusted their wills to the chaplain, lest they should not return; and

solemn indeed were the leave-takings between those who might, perhaps, never meet any more until they met before the throne of God. The next day the fleet anchored, and the soldiers went off in boats to the shore, some of them with a last grateful glance up at the chaplain, who watched their departure, but most too entirely occupied with exciting anticipations of what they were about to engage in; to remember any but themselves.

About six o'clock the following morning those left on board the ships were roused out of sleep by a tremendous cannonading beyond the hills abreast of which the fleet had anchored. In a little while all the women were astir, some pacing to and fro in restless agony, others bearing it on their knees. Hour after hour the long-drawn fire of musketry continued, every shot piercing their hearts. Towards noon the rattle retired farther and farther off, as if in retreat and pursuit. Then it dropped, and ceased altogether, and the chaplain got leave to go ashore and do his duty by the wounded. A fresh detachment of soldiers was drawn up on the beach, ready to march to the field of battle and bring them off, and Mr. Gwynne accompanied them six miles over the soft, burning sands, until they came to the scene of misery and death.

Ah, what a dreadful spectacle it was! How he yearned for the days of the Gospel of peace, "when nation shall not lift up the sword against nation,

neither shall they learn war any more!" The wounds of the majority were slight, but already two hundred, grievously hurt, had been carried into the farm buildings thereabouts, which necessity had converted into hospitals; and saddest, most pathetic of all, were left with the dead upon the ground some who, though still living, were beyond the healing arts of the surgeons. The chaplain came upon one, speechless yet perfectly conscious, by whom he knelt to administer what consolation he could. A look of surprise passed over the man's face; but while Mr. Gwynne was still praying, some soldiers trooped by and compelled him to go on with them, stragglers being in danger both from the native Hottentots and the Dutch boors, whose territory they were upon. The victory was with the English, but the tragical evidence of it before the chaplain's eyes was witness to the truth of that famous after-saying of the Great Duke, that, except a defeat, nothing is more terrible than a victory.

Spent with fatigue and hunger, Mr. Gwynne and a few others regained their ship, and the lovely southern night descended on sea and shore. On the morrow arrived a flag of truce from the enemy. The thundering boom of a gun from the Commodore awoke the echoes of the mountains. All the ships of war answered it. The chaplain, who was reposing in his cabin, came upon deck to enquire what it meant. His friend the mate pointed to the British flag flying

on the Dutch fort. The Dutch had capitulated, and the Cape was become a British possession. The fighting was at an end, the conquest completed, but, alas! how many griefs of it remained! One of the three officers who had committed their last wishes to the chaplain lay buried in the African sands, and his poor young widow quitted the *Union* to return to England in the first home-bound ship. Then amongst the enemy what pangs, what mortifications! Mr. Gwynne was introduced to the Governor's family, and found them 'a prey to the cruellest distress. The hospitals were full of sick and wounded, and they had many dead, and more disabled for life.

It was a consolation, after the sight of so much suffering and sorrow, to visit the Mission House; and there Francis Gwynne saw that good old man Vanderkemp, the perusal of whose narrative had been one of the primary causes of his own dedication to missionary work. Vanderkemp and his companions gave him an account of their labours, trials, and privations; but they said, one and all, that they would not exchange their work for a kingdom. They took him up Table Mountain, by a shallow watercourse, to show him the land of their exile. It was beautiful exceedingly, but the vast outlook over the world smote him as with a pang of most friendless desolation. Eastward stretched the great sea towards India—a very waste of waters to sever him from all whom he loved.

It seemed unreal as a dream that his banishment was for life. But the dejection of it yielded to prayer, and with a heart stirred up anew by converse with the missionaries, to hope all things and endure all things for Christ's sake and the Gospel's, he took his leave of them, looking forward courageously to the end of the tedious voyage.

Soon after leaving the Cape the fleet fell in with the trade-winds, and for a while made rapid progress towards India. But the sickness that had prevailed before, still continued and increased. The captain of the *Union* himself died, and, for a climax of misfortunes, they were becalmed in the midst of the Indian Ocean. Passengers, soldiers, crew, were put on half rations, lest the stores on board should not last till they reached their destination; and when, on April 17, they anchored in Madras Roads, it seemed to Francis Gwynne that he had already gone through the whole round of human miseries, and that no suffering was left for him to learn.

XIII.

Two Ends of one Chain.

"Oh, my God, if I live, let me have come hither to some purpose!" was Francis Gwynne's most touching prayer when he set foot at last upon the longed-for shores of India.

Here in Madras the hurly-burly of the world was loud as in England. A hundred coolies swarmed round him with vociferous offers of help, and near a dozen imposed their services on him, and attended him to the Custom House. Out of the number he selected a servant, and after dining, towards night-fall he went with this man for guide through an Indian village, a picture of wretchedness and despondent poverty. The silence was most profound and depressing; and as he walked in the midst of it, Francis Gwynne, reflecting on why he was there, felt no more that warm expansion of hope and joy which had exhilarated and sustained him at home as he mused on the conversion of the nations, but only a waiting faith and trust in God that His work would be done in good time, though himself should never see one native turned to Christianity.

The change of feeling was spontaneous and perfectly natural. Afar off imagination, enthusiasm, fervent desire, had free play; in the midst of heathendom he saw himself as but one man amongst millions, and no stronger than they, save as God might prosper him. No more dreams of sudden fruition, no more high hope of miraculous success were his. "If God will that by my patience and continuance in His work I may encourage future missionaries, that shall suffice me," was now his humble meditation; and the glowing visions that had been his inspiration hitherto, faded out of sight and out of memory. Then followed a term of physical torpor, and of inexpressible melancholy. Here was he in India, thousands of painful miles from all he loved, left without a motive, and with a vacant, worthless life on his hands:—thus he felt in his discouragement and relaxation of frame, thus he felt throughout a rough and perilous passage to Calcutta; but at Calcutta he was cordially welcomed by the Company's chaplains established there; and a little kindness was enough to refresh him, both body and spirit. For it is true that he had made no permanent friends amongst his fellow-passengers during the long voyage out: those who derided him at the first derided him to the last, and made a jest even of his leave-taking sermon on the ship. His principles, his manner, his style, were all unpopular with men of the world; the experienced did not believe his

doctrine, the young did not understand it. He knew this, and was deeply humiliated by the knowledge; and from wavering he fell to doubting whether he was really fitted for the work to which he had devoted his life. Others shared his doubts. The clergy in Calcutta desired to keep him there amongst the English residents, and the Governor was willing to consent; but to himself the idea of being hindered of his desired task when he had got within sight of it, through so much suffering and self-denial, was almost too grievous to be borne.

If he had expected, by quitting the scenes of his happiness at home, to escape from the temptations of pride, comfort, luxury, he now found that he had been deceived. His Cambridge honours were a note of value here; he had to attend the levées at Government House, to dine here, there, to preach to fashionable congregations, and to withstand a thousand trivial, unforeseen perplexities that threatened to undermine his stoutest resolves. The climate fevered his frame and sank him in perpetual lassitude, and his dissatisfaction with himself increased the natural irritability of his temper. Every day was a fight, and he began to feel that there would be no more peace for him until he had leave to depart and settle himself amongst the poor and destitute heathen.

While he was still in this unsettled state arrived a

batch of letters from England in answer to several that he had written from Madeira and the Cape. The most important were from his sister Mary, announcing the death of poor Martha, from Eleanour Trevelyan, and James Carden. Eleanour's was full of kindness —bright, animated, and animating. He could get no sleep that night for thinking of her; and the next day he talked of her and read her letter to a friend amongst the chaplains whom he most relied on and trusted. This gentleman strongly recommended him to try and bring the young lady out to India, assuring him that his future position and usefulness in the country would greatly depend on his being married. It is pleasant to listen to counsels that echo the ardent desires of our own hearts. Francis Gwynne had been reading lately the Life of Xavier, and the example of the saint had fired him with a momentary zeal to live and die as free of the world and as wholly for God as he had done. But Eleanour's tender words, the praises of James Carden, who had seen her twice since her lover's departure, and the strenuous advice of the experienced Indian minister, easily swayed his willing mind to the other side. After a few hours' hesitation and delay, to collect his thoughts, he wrote to her, prayed over his letter that the good Lord would direct her mind, and persuaded himself into a belief that he was ready to meet the decision with perfect calm, whichever way it might turn. And when it was

fairly gone, beyond repentance and beyond recall, he was really calmer. In fact, he hoped for the best—hoped with so much assurance, that he despatched by the same mail a commission to a friend in London to send him such and such things necessary to the formation of a household.

It was in July when he wrote, and he reckoned that five or six months must elapse before his letter could reach Eleanour's hands, and perhaps a year beyond that (supposing her answer propitious) before she could join him in Calcutta. Nevertheless, the mere taking of this decisive step proved singularly quieting to his disturbed mind. He had done all he could, and was now able to apply himself with revived assiduity to the study of the Oriental languages, and to the work of translating certain portions of the Scriptures and the Liturgy—work for which his great abilities and classical training fitted him much more signally than any of his forerunners in India.

It was still the opinion of the regular clergy in Calcutta that Francis Gwynne's place was *there*, and that he would be of more service, with his learning and personal influence, in directing other missionaries than in going up the country himself. His preaching in this great city drew crowds to hear him, and he had not even a familiar tongue wherewith to speak to the natives yet. And because of the prejudices of

the people, the lives of the missionaries were unsafe just then; one had lately been killed at Delhi, and the Governor-General had judged it expedient to place restrictions on their proceedings, lest worse should happen. But for all this, Francis Gwynne was not to be turned aside from his original purpose. Nothing would content him but leave to work as he had chosen, and after one or two applications that were not answered, he was finally appointed to the military station at Dinapore, and he set out on his journey thither at the end of September.

But even here he did not find that he had outrun the civilised Christian world. There were natives enough, but there was also a gay English society at Dinapore. The young folks danced and sang, made love and got married, wanted babies christening, and a genial chaplain to say grace at high festivities, precisely as they did elsewhere. And he had to conform himself as best he could to their necessities, and even to their tastes; for when they sent him word by the doctor that they liked his written sermons, but not his extempore discourses, though his first impulse was to resent such interference, his better sense prevailed against his pride, and on future Sundays, by compliance with their wishes, he practically acknowledged that it was his duty to deliver his message in an acceptable form. But he met with no congenial associate amongst his countrymen quartered here, and

the evident scorn and hatred with which the native population regarded him as he passed to and fro amongst them, merely because he was English, was a deep hurt and injury to his feelings.

At every step of his experience it seemed that new obstacles were to arise. He was at last placed where he had so ardently desired to be, but all at once he felt himself at a stand, not knowing what course to take; for the dialects of Bahar differed from those of Bengal, and differed again amongst themselves, with such a perplexing variety that the facility he had already acquired in pure Hindostanee was of little use to him, and his pundit advised him to set about the study of Sanscrit as the best foundation for a practical knowledge of the Oriental tongues. He applied to it with all diligence; and without any comfort but such as came to him from perfect dependence on God, or any refreshment but a rare letter from the friends he had left in Calcutta, the year wore to an end.

In Croxton Close there was deep snow upon the ground; the broad boughs of the cedars hung down with their weight of Christmas garlands, and the old houses thrilled and rocked to the chiming of the bells.

“A merry Ches’mass, and many of ‘em, Miss Eleanour,” said old John, as he entered her parlour

with breakfast for one, spread upon a small tea-board.

"The same to you, John," replied his young mistress, glancing round with a momentary smile, and then turning again to the window.

"It is a Ches'mass like the Ches'masses when I were a boy—snowy, blowy, an' right seasonable. Master will keep his room to-day, Miss Eleanour; he feels the pinching frost—it is in the natur' o' things old men should feel it, as their blood begins to run slow. We can't none of us be young twice."

"No, John." Eleanour sighed, as she acquiesced in the ancient servant's moral platitude, and leaving the window, she came and stood within the screen, looking down reflectively into the fire.

Her face had not waned one tint of its brightness and beauty, but her dress was black—tarnished as to its first freshness, but still significant of deep mourning. She wore it for her younger brother, who had died on the same day as the great Nelson:—only one brother was left her now, and he was at the other side of the world. She was like to have but a dull anniversary; for the good Canon had put himself on the retired list, and regulated his comings and goings up and down stairs by the barometer. Now, as ever, he took excellent care of himself, and was in the way to preserve his life for many years yet, by dint of

judicious precautions. Aunt Bell still survived in her pretty nut-shell near the Close-gate, but she was a confirmed invalid, and the positive duties of Eleanour Trevelyan's existence had dwindled to the comforting and cheering of these helpless and often querulous old folks.

She did not repine. There was no repining in her character. Every grief soon redressed itself, every waste was speedily repaired. She seated herself with composure before her solitary meal (old John would see that his master was provided for) and opened her morning-book to read—a cheerfully religious book, a sort of Golden Diary of little extracts from great divines, appropriate for every day, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs dispersed about the pages, a rest both to the mind and the eye.

She was about half-way through her customary portion when old John re-appeared with a shining countenance. "Letters, Miss Eleanour, and one of 'em with a rare smell o' the salt water. Will it be from the young lieutenant?" asked he—his long service giving him the right to ask.

Eleanour stretched out a quick hand to take them, the rosy colour mounting to her face meanwhile. No; the letter fragrant of salt water was not from the young lieutenant, her brother, it was from Frank Gwynne—and a very large full sheet, from the touch of it. The

others were just Christmas greetings from Hardwicke and ordinary friends. She read them first, reserving the letter from her lover till the last—till old John had carried out the tea-board, till she was safe from any more disturbance until the bell began to ring for Morning Service.

She kissed the seal with a sad, lingering tenderness, then cut carefully round it, lest by any means she should lose a word. She knew beforehand the pith of what was in it; and if the writer could have seen that wistful, regretful gesture, he would not have augured sanguinely for his suit. Eleanour fancied for several weeks after that she was doubting, hesitating, making up her mind; but from the very first moment there was no real doubt or hesitation in her thoughts. She never would of her choice go to India; she never would of her choice leave home and home treasures. Love was very sweet, very dear, but, weighed in the balance against all her other possessions, it did not outweigh them. She was not one of the passionate, self-devoted souls who will give the world for it. So she read Frank's long letter with tears, sadly; sorry for him, more sorry for herself, but not insufferably pained.

And yet he wrote persuasively, wrote to prevail. He told her how entirely his earthly happiness was bound up in hers, and with what delight he should welcome her as the greatest aid that could be vouch-

safed to him in his ministry. He told her what joy and courage her letter had infused into his heart, and how blessed he should be to have such a counsellor always near him. The impression of the voyage had worn off a little from his own mind, and he assured her that it was agreeable, and that the climate and people of India would please her much. The natives were mild and inoffensive, the land was a land of peace and plenty. She would never be left in solitude, because no chaplain was stationed where there was not a large English society. His house, servants, and salary were sufficient for their needs, and even their luxuries, and he was thankful to be able to tell her that his health was stronger than it had ever been in England. From these details, with a slight apology for assuming her consent, he went on to give her directions for coming out to Calcutta: suggested that a ship with the wife of a man of high rank in the service on board would be the best, and bade her bring Gilchrist's "Indian Strangers' Guide" to study on the voyage, which, he said, it would be desirable for her to make with the February fleet.

When Eleanour had read thus far she paused, meditated, gazed ruefully into the fire. She was figuring to herself poor Frank's disappointment. It was some minutes before she could continue her perusal of his letter, which waxed warmer, more urgent, towards the close, as if he could hardly lay

aside his pleading pen. "My heart is drawn to you with a tenderness that I cannot describe. Dearest Eleanour, in the sweet and fond expectation of your being given to me by God, and of the happiness which I hope you might yourself enjoy here, I find a pleasure in breathing out the assurance of my ardent love. I have now long loved you most affectionately, and my attachment is more strong, more pure, more heavenly, because I see in you the perfection of Christian womanliness. I unwillingly conclude by bidding my beloved Eleanour adieu."

The loud cathedral chimes to usher in the Christmas morning had ceased at half-past nine, and now began the slow old ding-dong call to prayers. Eleanour wiped her eyes, put Frank's letter into her pocket, carried the others to her uncle to read in his room, and then wrapped herself up warmly to go to church. She was moved, she was disturbed, she was glad, and she was troubled. She thought much of Frank, alone, as he described himself, and her heart melted with sweet compassion—ah, how happy she would be to comfort him, to keep him company, if the sacrifice of herself was not so dreadful! "He will come home again," she whispered and nestled in the kind delusion. "He will come home again—why should he not?" And this she made the pivot of her after reflections—that if she did not go to Frank, he would certainly return to her. She wished for it, prayed for

it, believed it, and stayed her mind upon it; and as the Christmas anthem swelled and filled the church, her heart too was filled with blessing, thanksgiving, and praise. She was happier, serener that day, than she had been on any day since Frank left her.

There were seasonable greetings and good wishes exchanged on all hands in the Close, as the congregation dispersed, and Miss Trevelyan had her share of them. For she was a favourite. Mr. Temple had forgiven her wilful blindness to his merits, and had lately married a more discerning lady, of equal beauty and greater fortune. Eleanour was his wife's chief friend in Croxton, and they walked and talked cordially together until they came to Mrs. Bell's garden-gate, where they parted with a promise of meeting in the twilight time for tea, Eleanour's parlour being the rendezvous.

Aunt Bell was up and dressed in her sitting-room overlooking the Close; herself, her cushions, foot-stools, little tables, and indispensable odds and ends all comfortably disposed between the fire and the window, and her long-suffering maid in attendance. Yet she had on a dissatisfied face.

"Why did you not come in before church-time?" said she, as her niece appeared.

"Did you expect me? I wish I had come then. I stayed to read my letters," said Eleanour, sweetly.

"Letters! From whom? You might have brought them—it is little enough I have to amuse me now-a-days. You can go, Jonas; Miss Trevelyan will ring for you when she leaves me." The maid went out, thankful to be released.

Eleanour laid aside her cloak and bonnet, and, placing herself opposite to the invalid, chatted cheerfully of the service, of the Dean's sermon, telling who was there, how people looked, what some of them wore, what others said, and so forth—nothing material, but quite enough to interest the declining faculties of the once vivacious old lady. Then, her gossip exhausted, she was silent, and sat looking into the fire with a pre-occupied, thoughtful expression.

"What are you thinking about, Nelly?" said Aunt Bell, who had been watching her inquisitively for some minutes.

Eleanour started, then smiled and confessed: "I was thinking of Mr. Gwynne—I had a letter from him this morning, too—the first since his arrival in India."

"What does he say? How does he like it? Is he repenting of his self-will and obstinacy?"

"He is repenting of nothing. He wishes me to go out and join him—that is all."

"That is *all*, indeed! And he calls himself a Christian, while he is tempting you to such selfish

wickedness! If you *do* go, Nelly, leaving me and your poor uncle so forlorn as we are, you will be worse than an infidel!"

Eleanour sighed. "I have been telling myself as much. It is impossible that I should go—at present."

"Quite impossible! Absurd! Have you spoken to the Canon?"

"No. It is cruel to disturb his mind for nothing, and the mere mention of such a chance would distress him beyond measure. It would almost kill him."

"Kill him! it would kill us both! I wonder you have broached it to *me*—it will prevent my sleeping to-night, and then I shall have a miserable day—I always have a miserable day when I lose my rest at night."

"It is necessary that I should take time to consider before answering so serious a proposal."

"Consider! it ought not to take much considering! It ought to be peremptorily declined!"

"You forget that we love one another—"

"I forget nothing! I know that you have both thrown the world away—*he*, for the sake of a fanatical vagary, and *you*, for his sake. If your heart inclines to follow him, you had better go! We shall not stand long in your way; but it is weary work waiting for dead people's shoes. Jonas will take care of me, and there is old John to mind your uncle; we shall be

sadly neglected, but it does not matter; nothing matters now;" and at this pathetic vision of herself Aunt Bell melted into tears, and Eleanour felt herself a monster of ingratitude for being the cause of them.

The old lady rallied, however, almost as suddenly as she had broken down. "But you will not go, Nelly; promise me you will not go. You like your comforts, and he could give you none out there. Perhaps, if you are firm, he may come back."

"That is my last hope and consolation," said Eleanour, in a low, melancholy voice. "Yet if he never should!"

"He will, be sure he will! He is no true lover if he refuse to give up his whim, when he has to choose between you and it."

Eleanour was thankful to hear even this interested voice in support of her own views; it made them clearer, more precise, more probable. She encouraged herself in the indulgence of them, and bade the old lady not fret for any fear of being forsaken. At evening prayers, however, in the dim religious light of the choir, when the organ was pouring forth its strains of rejoicing in the Hallelujah Chorus, her imagination was assailed by a crowd of mingled feelings—self-doubts, lookings back, lookings forward. She hardly knew what she wished. She was afraid of doing wrong; of laying up a store of regrets either here or

elsewhere: regrets here, if she put aside present natural duties; regrets elsewhere in the future, if she let Francis Gwynne's true, manly affection slip by her. It would have been easier if she had gone with him at first, she told herself; then her old people were not so helpless, now difficulties had accumulated. She could not forbear opening her mind to Mrs. Temple, when they were sitting within the firelit privacy of the screen in her parlour after service. Mrs. Temple knew the beginning of the story long before.

"What is the good to either of you of your incomplete sacrifice?" said she, with frankness. "An incomplete sacrifice is of all things the most unsatisfactory. You have given Mr. Gwynne your heart and word—why not be generous, and carry out your pledge? What does a little suffering matter? If you have it not in one form, you will have it in another. I see no lawful impediment as regards the Canon and Mrs. Bell—they have been father and mother to you, but they have friends—they have faithful servants. I very much doubt whether, half a dozen years hence, having stayed at home on their account will quite satisfy your conscience, if you have lost your lover. How say you?"

"I don't know what to say. I think he might have remained in England."

"Somehow, one does not expect the man to forego his vocation for the woman."

"Oh, you have such orthodox, right notions! He might have been as useful here."

"He did not think so. You should remember his honour—he could not love you so well, loved he not honour more. Yes—'tis an old song I quote, but it is true."

"Few persons thought his choice of life wise, or even fit."

"But his mind was set on it. If he had given it up, it would only have been for you; and think if he had repented! Such repentance makes enduring misery."

"He should not have repented! Even yet, I believe that he will return to me."

"If you are counting on *that*, counsel is vain."

"I cannot tell on what I am counting. I am beset with perplexities."

"You know what you wish?"

"Yes, I have always known that. I wished him to stay at home—now I wish him to come back. And if he will not?"

Mrs. Temple refrained from suggesting the contingency. She thought Miss Trevelyan but half-hearted in her love; and she had heard enough of Francis Gwynne to believe that he deserved more of her than that.

Talking of her difficulties to friends, and seeking their advice, did not lessen them. At the week's end,

at the month's end, Eleanour Trevelyan found herself in just the same position with respect to them as at the first; and her acquaintances said one to another quietly, that the secret of her indecision was, that in point of fact she did not wish to go to India. And this was about the truth—if the truth may best be ascertained from results. The worthy Canon had gone so far as to say before witnesses, that if it was for Nelly's happiness, he would bless her and let her go; and even Aunt Bell had at last protested against being called the only bar to her departure. James Carden had come over to see her, commissioned by Frank to plead his cause, and Mr. Barrington had written to her from Cambridge to the same effect. But her answer to her lover, when at length she wrote it, was a distinct refusal—and on the plea that she could not be satisfied with herself, or hope to be happy with him, if in their old age and infirmity she left to themselves those two who had stood to her in the light of parents.

It was October when Francis Gwynne received Eleanour Trevelyan's letter. It was a dreadful blow to him; mask it as he would, reason about it, resign himself as he would, it was still a dreadful blow. He did not soon rally from it. His pale looks, sleepless nights, languid,avourless days, testified to its mortal effects. He had indulged in an almost certainty that she would come: had exchanged his first house for a

newer and pleasanter dwelling, a pretty thatched bungalow surrounded by a garden, where she need want for no comfort, no luxury: had ordered from England Queen's ware for his table, which now he got rid of as a gift to a brother chaplain, more fortunate in his tender affairs.

After brief delay he replied to Eleanour—replied without any reproach. He entreated her, however, to continue her correspondence, and not to rescind her promise to himself, on the ground that, though her present position seemed against their union, they were one in heart. When Eleanour received this letter, she triumphed in her own foresight; she rejoiced and was exceeding glad: it confirmed her belief that his affections were too inalienably fixed upon herself for him to enjoy any dream of happiness apart; it raised her expectation that he would return to her, and that his return would not be long deferred.

But at present, no such return was in his thoughts. His grief had its day, and he went on with his work, studying, translating, doing his duties as chaplain, with as much diligence as was acceptable, and more; teased by trivial affronts, neglects, unkindnesses, and other minute thorns, which he endured with patience; and, for a variety in his calling, bound to make periodical visitations at long distances, where a few Europeans were stationed, for the purpose of marrying, baptising, and celebrating other rites of his

ecclesiastical office. It was a very different career from that which he had figured to himself in the enthusiasm of his ignorance at home, when carried away by the highly-coloured accounts of missionaries released from the disenchantment of actual mission-work. By the covenant of his service he was forbidden to proselytize amongst the Hindoos, and indeed, from what he had seen of the race, he had lost hope of them—he thought them a people void of understanding as the idols they worshipped.

Being alone in his house at Dinapore he took to live with him a learned Arabian Christian, who assisted him in translating the Gospels into Persian and Arabic. This stranger had been a man of many vicissitudes, and he infected the enterprising Englishman with a desire to quit the safe monotony of his chaplaincy and go on a mission-pilgrimage into Persia, where he assured him that millions of Mohammedans were ready to welcome the doctrine of the Cross, and were only waiting the advent of their apostle. One after another Francis Gwynne had seen his glowing visions dwindle in the light of common day, but his imagination still caught fire as easily as ever, and he lent a credulous ear to his colleague's Oriental fables, until he learnt to measure his words by the Oriental rule of splendid exaggeration.

Time thus slipped eventless by, and as anniversary after anniversary came round, he woke up for a little

while with an anguished recollection of his ancient fervour, and a dread lest life should escape him ere he had realised one of his great aspirations. Still, on the whole, his being was one of happy, studious seclusion, of holiness and true content. When most severely tried, he could always recur to the Divine promise that he shall be kept in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on God. And when no door was opened to him amongst the heathen, when his efforts for the European soldiers were ridiculed and repulsed with scorn, when his Arabian yoke-fellow wearied him by jealous pride and dogmatic conceit, he endeavoured to see the will and design of his heavenly Father in his many humiliations, and kept his lips from complaint.

The next change that awaited him was a removal to Cawnpore. This removal distressed him as separating him again from many in whom he was interested, and from a few who loved him. But its worst effect was on his health. He made the journey in the hot weather, and arrived at the station all but dead. And though he retained his post for a year or two, and did his duties there, he never quite recovered from his prostration of health and spirits. He was now farther away from his friends in Calcutta, and his European letters, as his absence from Europe lengthened, grew rarer and more rare. He heard from his brother-in-law that his sister Mary was ill—ill of the same com-

plaint that had destroyed his mother and Martha; but even when the warning reached him she was already at rest. A second appeal to Eleanour brought him only the same answer as at first, and after it followed a long, long silence:—he wrote to *her*, evidently found his chief pleasure in writing to her, though to seven successive letters there came no reply. If any replies were sent they failed to reach him. But at last he got one, an embarrassed little epistle, in which Eleanour implied that a rumour had come to her ears of his marriage, or approaching marriage, with another lady. He was then on the point of going down to Calcutta, on leave for six months to recruit his health, and he answered her pleasantly that never had his heart strayed from herself. She had reminded him that it might be his duty, for his life's sake, to go home to England, and to this he rejoined, that if it were so, it would be *her* duty not to let him return to India alone; and he told her plainly that he thought it would have gone better with him from first to last if he had had her by his side.

When this letter arrived at its address in Croxton Close, Eleanour Trevelyan was free of all ties in the world. It was just five years since she and Francis Gwynne had parted. Three years ago she had laid her poor Aunt Bell in the solemn repose of the cloisters, and within twelve months after she had buried the good old Canon. She was residing now in

the pretty little house near the Close-gate, which Mrs. Bell had bequeathed to her; old John and Jonas, her aunt's maid, being still in her service.

"He will come home from Calcutta; he will certainly come home now," she said to herself, poring tenderly over the tender words, and she let her fancy flow into beautiful dreams of reunion.

Her friends, her servants, remarked that from that time Miss Trevelyan recovered much of the gay sprightliness of her girlhood, which had quite gone from her in the recent tedious years of waiting on sickness and decay. She was regarded as a pattern of constancy, for all her world knew of her long engagement to Francis Gwynne, and of the temptations she had had to break it. But after her manner, she loved him with her whole heart.

The next news she had from Frank was written at sea, off the Malabar coast, on his way to Persia to perfect his translations of Holy Writ, and present them to the king. He gave her an account of rounding Cape Comorin, where he said the waves washed a narrow margin of beach, with green hills rising behind, and little churches and dwellings on the slopes, that reminded him of Cornwall; and he asked, did she ever revisit Pengarvon now, and did she ever walk on the white sands and imagine that the billows breaking on them had rolled all the way from India? The tone of this letter was full of a Christian sadness, and it

saddened Eleanour too: had she thrown away his life and her own? He finished it on his thirtieth birthday, with the reflection, that though many things be good, and some good as heart's desire, yet paradise is not here; his failures and disappointments had been continual, but he need not fear that God will fail or disappoint him; he will not have to regret that he has loved God too well; and whatever weariness and travail intervene, he shall at last reach his heavenly home, his eternal rest, at the feet of Jesus, and meet her there, his "best beloved friend."

A couple of months later, another letter, dated from Muscat, in April, reached Eleanour. In it Frank said he had received nothing from her for a year—why had she not written? but he still hoped that a letter in her dear hand might overtake him somewhere. A copy of part of this letter she sent to James Carden, with whom she kept up an intermittent correspondence for their common friend's sake. Close upon it came another, dated in June from Shiraz; a true love-letter, written on Sunday, when, as Frank told his lady, he indulged himself with a review of the past, and remembering the happy days when he went up to the house of God in company with those he loved, he remembered her, of all who were ever dear to him, the dearest. Their love is lasting, everlasting. He is sure if they meet no more on earth she will not forget him. And he is waiting still for tidings of her.

Scarcely a month had elapsed when he was addressing her again, telling her that for three-quarters of a year he had heard nothing of any one person whom he loves. He is alone amongst strangers; his friends in India think he is lost; he has been reported dead; but he survives many sufferings, and as he sits in his garden and muses over her, his spirit flies away to rejoin her—if she acknowledges a kindred feeling, they are not separated, their spirits have met and blended often. Eleanour's reply to this was the only one of her letters after he left Cawnpore that reached Francis Gwynne, and he wrote to her no more until he answered it: a silence of more than half a year she had to endure with what patience she might. Then came a short epistle written in fever and pain, announcing that he had got leave to go on furlough to England, but warning her faithfully that he had small hope of reaching home alive. It was followed, however, almost immediately by another, a longer and more cheerful communication, in which he told her that he was recovered of his sickness, and that he was going to return by Constantinople, Alexandria, and Malta. He bade her write to him at Malta, and ended by saying that soon they would have no more need of pen and ink, but would see each other face to face.

This welcome news she despatched to James Carden, that he might rejoice too; and then she counted the

months, weeks, days, hours, that must elapse before her faithful lover could arrive. No doubt for a moment obscured his coming. It was one of those blessed, long-prayed-for events with which it seems as if disappointment ought not to intermeddle.

That last letter, written towards the end of August, she received about the end of November, when the days were short and dull, and the nights long. Frank might be there about Christmas-tide, she reckoned, or with the New Year at the latest; for he had said that he was setting out on his journey almost immediately, and allowing for delays and accidents, this was interval enough.

With her peculiar prudence, Eleanour pitched the fruition of her hopes far off, that her heart might not sicken with its deferring. Mrs. Temple used to come and talk to her about it in the twilight, and it seemed to her sometimes that only now was she learning her own power for love and happiness. She could occupy herself about nothing; all her days were given up to waiting and expectation.

To vain waiting! to bootless expectation! Francis Gwynne's journey had ended in heaven before she had even heard that it was begun!

He had started on horseback from Tebriz on the 1st of September, accompanied by two Armenian servants, and carrying letters to the governors of the great towns he must pass through, and to the English

ambassador at Constantinople, whither the Armenians were to escort him. They travelled sometimes in the cool of the morning, but as often by night, crossing rivers, mountains, arid plains of strange aspect, but often familiar name. One long day they were under the shadow of Ararat, and by the month's end they were come into the neighbourhood of Tocat, where they heard that the plague was raging, and that the people were flying everywhere from the cities into the open country. Thirteen hours of one day, urged forward by his servants from sunrise to sunset, did the home-bound traveller persevere on his road, and then, at last, he sank by the wayside exhausted, with the cry on his lips: "Lord, Thy will be done! living or dying, remember me!"

About a fortnight later, one of his Armenians arrived at Constantinople, and delivered to the English ambassador the English stranger's papers, and a few other matters of minor importance. And what account of him? Nothing but this:—He was dead: he had died and been buried where thousands were dying in a day, and the bearer of the message had fled for his life from the scene of pestilence.

The ambassador forwarded the news to England, and one brilliant December morning, as Eleanour Trevelyan was going to prayers in the cathedral, she observed a group of the clergy, the Dean, Mr. Temple, and one or two more talking together, and amongst

them James Carden. They all acknowledged her passing, but not one advanced to speak to her, and she went forward into the choir alone.

To James Carden from London had been transmitted all of Francis Gwynne's effects that had come to England, and he was in Croxton for the purpose of delivering his journals to Miss Trevelyan, to whom the later portions of them were evidently addressed. After service he followed her to her house, and was admitted by old John. "Eh, sir, but you are not bringing good tidings!" whispered the servant, looking into his face. He shook his head; and when he entered Eleanour's parlour, and she rose with eager, beautiful animation to welcome him, he had but to lift his hand, pointing to heaven, and his tale was told.

Never more, oh, never more in this world!

EPILOGUE.

HALF A LIFE-TIME AGO.

"I HAVE read his journals again and again; I know them by heart; they have been my study for twenty years; but I cannot, no, I cannot see what profit there was in his life."

The speaker was Miss Trevelyan, her hearer James Carden. The scene was her pretty window overlooking Croxton Close. On a table between them lay Francis Gwynne's voluminous papers, the subject of their discussion.

"No man ever more literally fulfilled the Divine command to forsake all, take up the Cross, and follow Christ."

"If self-renunciation be the first of Christian virtues, he practised it—and also he imposed it upon others. He was holy, just, and true—but what profit was there in his life? You call him *missionary*—where are his witnesses? He held disputation with several learned Eastern doctors—did he convince any? He preached to five hundred beggars at one time—did he convert any? With the help of native

scholars he made translations from Holy Writ. I believe he baptised one poor old Hindoo woman. I know he bore with much ridicule, scoffing, mockery; I know he suffered a martyrdom of sorrows; I know he died alone—in a strange land—alone. If God accepted his sacrifice, where is his witness?"

"His witness is the loving admiration of all good men. His noble example has drawn many after him. The seed he sowed is springing up a hundred fold. His name will be a light to the world for generations."

"Well, take them, take his journals—let the world know how he laboured and sorrowed, and saw no fruits of his labours."

"It is not true that success makes the hero. Some day you will be satisfied that what Francis Gwynne did was well done; you will not call his journals only a pathetic record of a disappointed life. He was happier than you or I, for he fulfilled more perfectly the will of his Heavenly Father."

"The sweet peace in his Saviour that he felt when dying, worn out in His service, is, I suppose, the moral of his story."

"It is a beautiful story, a noble story, look at it as you will. Yes—take that for the moral of it. So God giveth His beloved sleep."

It was thus Francis Gwynne's journals came to be printed. A memoir of him had already appeared, but Miss Trevelyan called it too glowing; and at length,

after the lapse of twenty years, she entrusted his papers to James Carden to edit and publish. Half the world who read them took her view of them; the other half took his friend Carden's.

But all the world was of one mind to consider it Eleanour Trevelyan's title of honour that Francis Gwynne loved her.

THE END.

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